

# THE COMMUNIST

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SEPTEMBER, 1933

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# The Fourteenth Anniversary of Our Party

OUR Party was born in struggle. Our Party was launched in a period of revolutions and uprisings in a number of capitalist countries and colonial possessions. The organizing convention was held less than two years after the Bolshevik revolution in Russia. Our Party was organized in the year of the formation of the Third (Communist) International.

It was in the struggle against the reformist Socialist Party of America, a section of the social-chauvinist Second International, that the forces crystallized that launched the Communist Party.

From the first our Party came forward as the Party of proletarian class struggle. It grew from the ranks of the matured American proletariat whose vanguard it is in the conduct of the day-to-day struggle toward its historic culmination in the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

## PARTY OF THE TOILING MASSES

Our Party came forward as the Party of the entire American working class, as the Party of all the toilers in the land. Against the policy of the Socialist Party to base itself upon elements of the middle class, the Communist Party rose to champion essentially the interests of the workers and poor farmers. Against the practice of the American Federation of Labor leadership to shape its policies in conformity with the immediate interests of the most highly skilled upper strata of the working class (the aristocracy of labor that is now being smashed down to the lowest level by the crisis) the Communist Party tried to rally the most exploited masses, the vast unorganized toilers in factories, mills, mines, docks, railways, and fields, the millions left outside by the A. F. of L., the betrayed workers inside the A. F. of L., the foreign-born workers and the doubly oppressed Negro masses.

The great steel strike was already under way when the Party was organized in September 1919, but it was not then possible for the Party to play a role of importance in this historic conflict, owing to a number of circumstances, not the least being our leftist sec-

tarian and infantile position on work in the reformist trade unions that marred the first period of the existence of our Party. In spite of this, however, hundreds of individual Party members were in the forefront of the fight.

In the so-called race riots in Chicago the Party came forward as the one voice calling for unity of Negro and white workers against the meat packing trust and other employers and their agents, against the city administration of Chicago which was responsible for the still uncounted dead who died in that week of frightfulness just on the eve of the organizing convention of our Party.

Our Party was the first to raise a protest against the Wilson government which was carrying out the deportation drive against foreign-born workers.

#### GOVERNMENT TRIES TO SMASH PARTY

Real efforts were made to respond to the elementary needs of the masses, but it was not possible under the conditions of its immaturity for the Party to come forward as a leader of mass struggles, although it was moving in that direction.

The capitalist state power, using its full force to smash down the standards of life of the toiling masses who were fighting to realize some of that "democracy" that Wilson had promised them during the war, was fully aware of the threat contained in the very existence of the Communist Party. It saw in our young Party a threat to its plans in its first post-war drive against the working class. It prepared and delivered a heavy blow in the notorious "Red Raids" of January 1920. The whole leadership and thousands of members as well as workers outside the Party were herded into jails, while official government vandals raided and wrecked headquarters, residences, barred the entrance to halls, etc.

#### COULD NOT DESTROY PARTY

Thus the Party was compelled, in the formative stage of its existence, to wage an intense struggle against the vicious attacks by the government which was bent upon accomplishing its destruction. It had to fight to preserve its newly-formed organization.

In this period the Party faced the task not only of resisting the attempts of the government to keep it isolated from the masses, but of also beginning a stern struggle against the language federation form of organization, inherited from the social-democracy and organized upon a basis that was social-democratic.

In spite of all shortcomings and difficulties the Party succeeded in maintaining itself as an organized force. Even during the days of illegality, considerable success was realized, through the Friends

of Soviet Russia and the campaign for famine relief in Russia, in reaching considerable masses.

The Party weathered the storm of governmental suppression and found ways of emerging from its condition of illegality. The early sectarian approach to trade union questions, such as endorsing the I.W.W., as the one organization to lead the economic struggles of the American masses and the campaign "to smash" the A. F. of L. were giving way to serious attempts to work among the organized masses. The organization and launching of the Trade Union Educational League were of great significance in this stage and enabled us to participate in strike struggles, not merely as agitators, but in many instances as prime leader.

The Bridgeman convention of the Party was held in 1922 and resulted in the decision to wage a fight for legality of the Party—to do away with the Party as an "underground" organization. In connection with this a struggle had to be waged within the Party against an organized caucus that declared for "illegality" under all conditions. Another blow from the government was administered by the raids at Bridgeman where a large number of Party leaders were arrested and thrown in jail. But around the issue of the defense of the victims of the government raid on Bridgeman the Party succeeded in winning new support.

From that time onward the Party put forward consistent efforts to develop its historic role of leader of the toiling masses. Our Party organized and led militant strike struggles, struggles of unemployed, farmers' struggles, defense campaigns, struggles of the Negro masses. The textile strikes in Paterson, Passaic, New Bedford, Gastonia; the mine struggles in Pennsylvania-Ohio, Kentucky, Illinois; the great unemployment demonstrations of March 6, 1930; the sharecroppers' conflicts in Alabama; the hunger marches to Washington; the defense of the Scottsboro boys—these struggles have become classic in the history of American class conflicts,

In the course of these struggles, the Party has succeeded in building a number of basic mass revolutionary organizations, chief among which are the Red industrial unions organized in the Trade Union Unity League.

#### WEAK ORGANIZATIONAL RESULTS

It must be stated, however, that the organizational residue of the important struggles led by the Party is far from commensurate with the militancy and solidarity displayed in the course of those struggles. At many strike centers where we gave leadership our Party and our mass organizations have failed to build themselves sufficiently among the workers who have so implicitly accepted our

leadership. This failure is mainly chargeable to a sectarian policy of work, springing from an unclear understanding of the relationship of Party to class, expressing itself in practice in our failure until very recently to begin making the turn toward the workers in the basic industries.

After the end of such struggles, especially the strikes, we failed to maintain contacts, to say nothing of consolidating our forces, with the result that in many places where our leadership prevailed during the heat of conflict we today are faced with the necessity of beginning all over again. One of the main defects leading to such poor results was the Right opportunistic course of not only failing to bring forward the Party but of actually trying to hide the face of the Party from the masses, yielding to provocative attacks of the enemy who put forth "red scare" propaganda. The other side of the opportunist medal was expressed in "leftist" sectarianism, characterized by failure to broaden the organization and the struggle, failure to take full advantage of the mass initiative of the workers, inability to terminate conflicts at a decisive moment, etc.

Slowly, but nevertheless surely, these defects are being overcome and there is evident in most sections of the Party a more careful approach to all problems involved in preparing actions and in following them up with attempts at organizational consolidation.

#### OUR WORK AMONG FARMERS

The Communist Party is coming forward more and more to take the lead in the struggles of the farm workers and the small farmers against the rich landlords and the bankers. The aim is to convert the toilers of the countryside into a conscious ally of the proletariat in the common struggle against the capitalist class.

In this work there has not been carried out the necessary unmasking of the strike-breaking leaders of the various farm struggles. Here, also, as in strike struggles among industrial workers, there has been and still is too much of a tendency to hide the Party, with the result that there is slight Party influence among the masses of impoverished farmers who are entering into sharp struggles against the Roosevelt New Deal.

It is first of all necessary to build the Party among the rural population. The idea that the farmers are "naturally" opposed to revolutionary action and will be frightened away from the movement if the Party plays the role it should, is refuted by the willingness of farmers in struggle to rally to support of the program of action; cancellation of debts, taxes, etc., for poor and ruined farmers.

It is especially necessary that there be concentration among the agricultural workers of the West Coast; among the sharecroppers and plantation workers in the South; among the poor and middle farmers in the Northwest, Iowa, Nebraska and Eastern Pennsylvania, so that the Party may play a leading role among the radicalized farmers.

#### STRUGGLE FOR NEGRO LIBERATION

The Communist Party recognizes in the struggle of the American Negro masses the national liberation struggle of an oppressed, super-exploited nationality that strives to throw off the yoke of the white ruling class. It is the historic task of the Party to help develop this struggle, to steer it through its day-to-day manifestations along the course leading to the complete liberation of the Negroes as a nation. It recognizes that the liberation of the American working class from capitalist exploitation is inseparably bound up with the national liberation of the Negro people. To this end it constantly rallies the entire working class to the active support and defense of the Negro national liberation movement. It rallies the toiling masses everywhere to come forward in solidarity with the Negro masses in their struggle against lynchings, segregation, discrimination and super-exploitation. It advances for the Negro masses the slogan: Complete economic, political and social equality. It advances as the objective of the national liberation struggle of the Negro people the right to self-determination for the Black Belt of the South.

The Communist Party brings forward the Negro proletariat as the leading and driving force in the national liberation struggle, as the force whose hegemony over the Negro national revolutionary movement is the sole guarantee for the development of the struggle to its historic objective—the liberation of the Negro toilers along with the white toilers from all exploitation and oppression.

#### STRUGGLE FOR COLONIAL LIBERATION

Our Party has demonstrated to the American workers that their struggles against the American capitalist class are linked with the struggles of the workers throughout the capitalist world, are linked with the struggles of the colonial peoples for liberation from imperialist tyranny. Especially is it the task of the Party to solidarize the American working class with the liberation struggles of the colonial peoples, particularly the Yankee colonial possessions.

In the present uprising of the Cuban masses against American imperialism the Communist Party of the United States is rallying the working class against the Roosevelt intervention, to demand the immediate repeal of the Platt Amendment, the evacuation of the

Guantanamo naval base and the cancellation of Wall Street loans made to the bloody Machado regime, and to support the Communist Party of Cuba in its task of mobilizing the Cuban masses for revolutionary struggle against imperialism.

The Party has carried on a consistent campaign for immediate and complete independence of the Philippine Islands, exposing the independence maneuvers of American imperialism, of Quezon and other native Filipino misleaders.

The Party supported the army of liberation of Sandino fighting against the armed forces of American imperialism, at the same time pointing out the lack of a social program by Sandino on behalf of the workers and peasants of Nicaragua.

We recently helped force the release of the Haitian working class leaders, arrested for organizing sugar workers on the American plantations. Our Party exposed the fake treaties which Hoover tried to impose and which the Roosevelt administration is foisting on the Haitian people. Our Party advocates the immediate and complete independence of Haiti.

Again we must admit that our support of the colonial struggles is still weak. The colonial revolution is a part of the world revolution and should be given every assistance and defended in every way by the working class of the United States.

#### **CAMPAIGN AGAINST IMPERIALIST WAR AND FOR DEFENSE OF THE SOVIET UNION**

In all our campaigns there must be tireless activity to mobilize the masses for struggle against the war plans of the imperialists, to protest and organize definite actions, such as stopping arms and munitions shipments. The feverish war preparations are a warning to the toiling masses that the most decisive actions must be taken against the conspiracies to unleash a new world slaughter, designed to be even more colossal and devastating than the war of 1914-18. In this connection special activity must be carried on among the toiling youth and particular assistance given to the Young Communist League in its anti-imperialist activity, in its work of penetrating the armed forces, etc.

The Communist Party rallies the American working class and all the toiling masses to defend the Soviet Union against the war plots of world imperialism, to defend the Chinese people against the ravages of imperialism, to demand that all war appropriations be converted into unemployment insurance for the millions of unemployed workers.

We constantly warn the American workers against the illusions of pacifism spread by liberals and Socialists. We bring before the

masses the Marxist-Leninist analysis of capitalism to demonstrate that war is inherent in the capitalist system, that the only way to end war is to overthrow the capitalist system. Our Party equips the workers with the understanding that the struggle against the imperialist war must, in the event of war, be turned at the opportune moment into civil war for the overthrow of the war-breeding capitalist order. At the same time we fight against the illusions prevalent among some Communists that revolution without imperialist war is impossible.

#### INTERNATIONALIZATION OF THE PARTY

As the United States section of the Communist International, our Communist Party takes part in the world revolutionary movement. It contributes in every possible way to aiding the fight of the working class and the oppressed masses in all parts of the world. It has representatives in the Communist International who study and contribute to the solution of the problems of all other Parties in the world. At the same time our Party has the benefit of the universal experiences of the revolutionary working class of the whole world which are expressed through the leadership of the Communist International. On many occasions since 1919 our Party has had the guidance of the Communist International in solving the most complicated problems.

#### THE STRUGGLE AGAINST OPPORTUNISM

At every new stage in the post-war decay of capitalism there arose in our Party, as well as in other Parties of the world, opportunist elements that, yielding to the pressure of the bourgeoisie upon the proletariat, sought to evade the struggle. The purging of the Party of elements that tried to carry into our ranks the ideology of a hostile class has been imperative on a number of occasions.

In 1922 it was Salutsky (now J. B. S. Hardman), one of the bureaucrats of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, who wanted to make the Party an appendage to the Hillman and A. F. of L. machines and who refused to carry out Party policy in a labor conference at Cleveland, who had to be expelled from the Party. Since that time he has gone over completely into the camp of the enemy as a social-fascist.

Ludwig Lore, from 1922 to the time of his expulsion in 1925 was actively trying to force the Party toward an opportunist social-democratic course. He refused to carry out the correct policy of submitting the German paper of which he was editor, the *Volkszeitung*, to Party control, striving to keep it as an organ carrying out his opportunist line in opposition to the Party. Along with this

he attempted to steer the Party away from its loyalty to the Communist International. He and his followers, in the period of the relative and temporary stabilization of post-war capitalism, capitulated to the bourgeois ideology of the strength of capitalism and the impossibility of revolutionary struggle.

During and after the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International there developed a group under James P. Cannon that tried to swing the Party to the position of counter-revolutionary Trotskyism, denying the possibility of building Socialism in one country, and denying that capitalism had entered the Third Period of its post-war decline. Their slanders of the Communist International and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, under the leadership of Comrade Stalin, furnished ammunition for the anti-Soviet and interventionist plans of the capitalist world in trying to solve their contradictions at the expense of the Soviet Union. Their attempts to swing the Party from the course of Marxism-Leninism to the counter-revolutionary position of Trotskyism led to their exclusion from our ranks. Since then a considerable number of honest working class elements, who realized their Trotskyist errors and the path on which they were leading them, have been readmitted to the Party. Today there are few working class elements in the ranks of the Trotskyites, but they have attracted to their support a number of intellectual and adventurist elements who have blossomed forth as distorters and perverters of Marx. They play a particularly vicious role today in striving to disrupt working class action in defense of the Soviet Union by vilifying the Bolshevik leadership of the C.P.S.U. and attempting to cripple the fight in defense of the German masses against the fascist terror, by the vilest slanders of the leadership of the Communist Party of Germany, which alone has conducted a consistent and heroic fight against Hitler. It is necessary to carry out an uncompromising fight against these counter-revolutionary elements.

It was less than one year after the expulsion of the Cannon-Trotskyites that the Lovestone-Brandlerite factionalist elements began an assault upon the Party and the Communist International. They developed a theory of the unexampled might of American imperialism, and held that the United States was an exception to the rest of the capitalist world. Hypnotized by the relative stabilization of capitalism, then rapidly approaching its worst crisis, they saw in the United States what they regarded as only the continued strengthening, the "new golden era", of capitalism. In the Soviet Union, just entering the first Five-Year Plan of socialist construction they saw only insurmountable difficulties, and thus came to the support of the Right opportunist element in the Communist Party of

the Soviet Union, as well as the Brandlerite renegades in Germany. They came to the aid of the social democracy by denying that the leadership of the Second International and of its various sections was social-fascist—objectively aiding the bourgeoisie introduce fascism.

Through factional mechanical methods the Lovestone clique turned the Sixth Convention of the Communist Party of the United States (March, 1929) into a forum for attacks on the fundamental Marxist-Leninist line of the Communist International. For persisting in their anti-revolutionary policy and their repeated defiance of the Communist International, they were expelled. Like the Cannon-Trotskyites the Lovestone-Brandlerites objectively aid the anti-Soviet plots of the imperialist interventionists by trying to weaken the working class in its defense of the Soviet Union. Among the small number that followed them out of the Party, most of the working class elements have seen the direction in which they were traveling, have admitted their errors, repudiated their actions in support of Lovestone and have been readmitted to the ranks of the Party.

The Lovestone renegades have sought to ally themselves with all sorts of social-fascists and left social-fascists, making alliances with the Musteites against the Communists in strikes. Their followers in the needle trades in New York align themselves with the worst reactionaries in actively betraying the workers fighting against the sweat shop and aid in supporting former Police Commissioner Grover Whalen and the Roosevelt NRA program.

In all these struggles to defeat hostile anti-Party elements the Communist Party of the United States has had the assistance and guidance of the world Party—the Communist International.

#### MUST BECOME LEADER OF MASSES

Although organizing and leading many struggles, especially unemployment struggles, the waging of the Scottsboro campaign, the leading of a series of strikes, the Party has not yet been able to come forward as the leader of decisive sections of the toiling masses.

The Fourteenth Plenum of the Central Committee of our Party fully recognized this and adopted a fundamental document that pledged to carry out the decisions of the Twelfth Plenum of the Communist International, which demanded that all Parties break down their sectarianism, overcome isolation from the masses, take the lead in organizing and leading great mass struggles along the whole class front. The two subsequent plenums—the Fifteenth and Sixteenth—did not mark any decisive change, in spite of certain effective actions.

Now, with the fiercest attacks being made, under cover of the Roosevelt demagoguery, through the "National Recovery (Slavery) Act", to force the masses to a lower standard of life and to speed preparations for imperialist war, the Party is faced with tremendous responsibility.

The Open Letter to the Party from the Extraordinary Conference held on July 7-10 of this year places the problem sharply of making the turn instead of merely talking about it. It means that the most determined Bolshevik steps must be taken to overcome our sectarianism and become the leader of the masses. This means exterminating, from top to bottom, all formalistic and bureaucratic methods of work, renewing and strengthening the Party cadres and actual penetration of the basic industries of the country. It is only through maintaining the Party on a firm proletarian base that there can be any talk of winning the widest possible sections of the toiling masses as allies of the working class.

On this occasion of the Fourteenth Anniversary of our Party it is essential that every Party member realize that we have the forces that enable us to make this decisive change in our work. To achieve this means that every member must bend all efforts toward enabling the Party to fulfil the tasks set for us in the Open Letter so that we can become the Bolshevik leader of the toiling masses in this country.

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# From the Open Letter

TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

*(Adopted by the Extraordinary National Conference of the Communist Party of the U.S.A., held in New York City, July 7-10, 1933.)*

**T**HE working class will be in a position to fulfil its role as the most decisive class in the struggle against finance capital, as the leader of all toiling masses, only if it is headed by a Communist Party which is closely bound up with the decisive strata of the workers. But a Communist Party, with a very weak and inadequately functioning organization in the big factories and among the decisive sections of the American industrial workers, a Communist Party whose entire policy, whose entire agitation and propaganda, whose entire daily work is not concentrated on winning over and mobilizing these workers and winning of the factories, a Communist Party which, through its revolutionary trade union work, does not build highways to the broadest masses of workers, cannot lay claim to a policy capable of making it the leader of the working class within the shortest possible time.

The necessary concentration of our work on the most important factories does not, of course, in any way mean that we should allow our work among the unemployed to slacken. In carrying out this main task we should not for an instant lose sight of the fact that we represent the interests of the entire class, and that, especially under the present conditions the unemployed constitute a factor of greatest revolutionary importance. One of the chief tasks of the Party is the organizing and mobilizing of the millions of unemployed for immediate relief and unemployment insurance and the linking up of their struggles with the struggles of the workers in the big factories—full-time, as well as part-time workers—especially now, in view of the introduction of militarized forced labor for the unemployed and the increased attempts to bring them under reformist and fascist influence. But the Party cannot carry out this task successfully unless at the same time it establishes its base in the decisive big factories. Hunger marches and other activities of the unemployed must be accompanied by sympathetic actions on the part of the workers in the factories, while the actions of the workers in the factories must receive the most active support from the unemployed.

# From Left Socialism to Communism

By ALEX BITTELMAN

THE formative period in the history of our Party appears as a development from left Socialism to Communism. The essence of this development consisted in this, that the Left Wing of the Socialist Party (1918-1919) was gradually freeing itself from vacillation between reformism and ultra-left radicalism by means of an ever closer approach to the positions of Marxism-Leninism.

The Left Wing of 1918, the organizer of our Party, was very definitely opposed to the reformist leaders of the Socialist Party and of the American Federation of Labor and was consciously organizing for a complete organizational break with the opportunists in the Socialist movement. Furthermore, the Left Wing of 1918, unlike the previous left currents in the American labor movement, took issue with the reformists on *all* the basic problems of the class struggle of the present epoch, chief of which was the problem of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. And in this the Left Wing of 1918 was consciously following—or, rather, was trying to follow—the lead of Lenin and the Bolsheviks. It is this central fact that determines the historic role of the Left Wing of 1918 as the bridge for the class conscious workers of the United States from vague left Socialism and general proletarian militancy to the definite and solid foundations of Leninism.

However, when it came to the concrete application of the fundamental principles of Leninism to the class struggle as it developed from day to day, the Left Wing manifested great vacillations between reformism and ultra-left radicalism. Also there was a strong current of sectarianism running through its policies and tactics. These weaknesses of the Left Wing were somewhat similar to the weaknesses of the first Marxian groups in the United States. Of these latter, Engels wrote in 1886 that they “have not been able to use their theory as a lever to set the American masses in motion. To a great extent they do not understand the theory themselves and treat it in a doctrinaire and dogmatic fashion as if it were something which must be committed to memory and which then suffices for all purposes without further ado. For them it is a credo, not a guide for action.” It must be added, however, that

the Left Wing of 1918, having arisen in the epoch of the general crisis of world capitalism and of the proletarian revolution, was bound to outlive its weaknesses much sooner and to find its way to the American masses much more easily than had been the case with the first Marxian groups.

From the foregoing it will not be correct to assume that the only element that went into the making of the Communist Party of the United States was the Left Wing of the Socialist Party. As a matter of fact, there were many more left and militant elements, such as came from the Socialist Labor Party, the American Federation of Labor, the Industrial Workers of the World, etc. Generally, therefore, our Party springs from the left and militant elements in the labor movement as a whole. Moreover, in the period that followed the organization of our Party in 1919, it was through the left wing in the trade unions, headed by Foster, that the Communist movement began to derive its main strength and influence. But in the formative period (1918-1919), the basic left group which organized our Party was the Left Wing of the Socialist Party, the outstanding representative of which was Ruthenberg.

#### THE ISSUES OF STRUGGLE

The social-fascist historians of the American labor movement (James Oneal & Co.), maintain that the issue between the official leaders of the Socialist Party and the Left Wing of 1918 was Socialism versus Anarchism. Nothing is further from the truth. As we shall see, the central issue was the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, that is, revolutionary Marxian Socialism versus reformism. And only hopeless philistines and outright flunkys of capitalist rule can confuse the adherents of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat with Anarchism. Oneal's method of "proving" this point is quite simple. He takes all the elements in the American labor movement of the past who advocated militant methods of struggle and direct mass action and dubs them Anarchists; then he discovers that the Left Wing of 1918 also advocated militant class struggle and mass action; hence, the Left Wing derives from Anarchism.

It is not the purpose of this article to trace the development of the Communist movement in the United States back to the labor movement of the pre-imperialist era. But that much can be seen without much argument, that the struggle between Marxism and Anarchism (Bakounin & Co.) in the United States during the period of the First International was not a struggle between the opponents of "force" in the class struggle and its adherents, as Oneal tries to make it out. Marx and Engels were no pacifists, and their struggle against Anarchism was not because of its "vio-

lence" but because it represented the ideology of the petty-bourgeoisie and not of the working class. The historic mass struggles and street battles of the American proletariat in 1877, which the present-day social-fascist bemoans as an unfortunate episode that seemed to strengthen the "force tendencies" in the labor movement, Marx greeted as the "first explosion against the associated oligarchy of capital which has arisen since the civil war." And while he foresaw that the movement would be suppressed, Marx pointed out that it "can very well form *the point of origin* of an earnest workers' party." (*Letter to Engels*, July 25th, 1877)

The Communist movement of the United States is undoubtedly absorbing and assimilating all the militant and revolutionary traditions of the American working class. Following in the footsteps of Lenin, who restored the revolutionary essence of Marxism, developing it further in the era of imperialism, the American Communists unquestionably seek to revive these traditions, raising them to the present higher stage of preparation for the struggle for power. But it is just as unquestionable that the social-fascists of today are the direct descendants of those petty-bourgeois elements who throughout the history of the American labor movement in the imperialist era had tried to keep the working class chained to the chariot of the capitalist class, hampering and retarding its growth into an independent political force.

From its very inception the Left Wing of 1918 was conscious of the fact that its differences with the official leadership (Right Wing and Centrist) were of a fundamental character. "Many see in this internal dissension merely an unimportant difference of opinion or, at most, dissatisfaction with the control of the party and the desire to replace those who have misused it with better men. We, however, maintain that there is a fundamental distinction in views concerning party policies and tactics. And we believe that this difference is so vast that from our standpoint a radical change in party policies and tactics is necessary." (*From the Manifesto and Program of the Left Wing Section Socialist Party, Local Greater New York.*)

In accord with this conception, the Left Wing brought to the forefront the basic question of the present epoch—the question of the attitude of the proletariat to the capitalist state and the struggle for the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. The Left Wing maintained that official Socialism ("dominant moderate socialism") "accepted the bourgeois state" and "strengthened that state"; the Socialist leaders had "lost sight of socialism's original purpose, their goal became 'constructive reforms' and cabinet portfolios—the co-operation of classes." Moreover, the Socialist leaders were ready to

“share responsibility with the bourgeoisie in the control of the capitalist state even to the extent of defending the bourgeoisie against the working class.” (*Left Wing Manifesto*)

And what was the position of the Left Wing on the question of the capitalist state? Says the Manifesto:

“Marx declared that ‘the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery and wield it for its own purposes.’ This machinery must be destroyed. . . . The attitude towards the state divides the Anarchist (anarcho-syndicalist), the ‘moderate socialist’ and the revolutionary socialist. Eager to abolish the state (which is the ultimate purpose of revolutionary socialism), the Anarchist and anarcho-syndicalist fail to realize that a state is necessary in the transition period from capitalism to Socialism; the ‘moderate socialist’ proposes to use the bourgeois state with its fraudulent democracy, its illusory theory of the ‘unity of all classes,’ its standing army, police, and bureaucracy oppressing and baffling the masses; the revolutionary socialist maintains that the bourgeois state must be completely destroyed and proposes the organization of a new state—the state of the organized producers—of the Federated Soviets—on the basis of which alone can Socialism be introduced.”

And this is the position which Hillquit, Oneal & Co. had met with the charge of Anarchism and anarcho-syndicalism!

It is obvious that in formulating its views on the question of the capitalist state, the Left Wing was trying to follow Lenin (the Bolsheviks), many of whose writings—as *The State and Revolution*—were already available at that time in the United States. But it is just as obvious, from the Left Wing Manifesto as a whole, that many leading Leninist ideas escaped the Left Wing altogether while others were insufficiently understood. Thus, the Manifesto throughout speaks of “moderate” Socialism as the exponent of opportunism in the parties of the Second International without a differentiated and close analysis of the various shades and forms of opportunism. This was especially necessary at that time, as Lenin repeatedly insisted, because the most dangerous variety of opportunism was then the Centrist group (Kautsky, Trotsky, Hillquit to a certain extent, etc.). Failing to expose the nature of Centrism as hidden opportunism and the most effective cover for the open betrayals of the social-chauvinists, the Left Wing Manifesto disarmed itself to a considerable extent in the struggle against the opportunist leadership of the Socialist Party of America, which, under the guidance of Hillquit, occupied a position of Right Centrism rather than of open social-chauvinism; or, more precisely, it was maneuvering between social-chauvinism and Centrism. It was partly for this reason that the weakest part of the Manifesto is the one that deals with the nature of “moderate” Socialism in the United States. This very

serious error was only partly rectified in the agitation of the Left Wing press, with the result that the Hillquit leadership was able, more or less easily, to carry on "left" maneuvers (willingness to join the Communist International on certain conditions) even after the formation of the Communist Party.

Nor does the Manifesto analyze the economic and class basis of opportunism, namely, the corruption of the labor bureaucracy and aristocracy by imperialism. There is no need for this article to explain the importance—theoretical and practical—of this Leninist idea. The question arises how could this idea have escaped the Left Wing Manifesto, especially in the United States of that period where the corruption was so ripe and where the splitting up of the working class was being carried out so consistently and openly by the reformists, most particularly by the leaders of the American Federation of Labor? That the Left Wing was familiar with this idea, and was developing it in its discussions of trade union questions, can be seen from the Left press. Then how could it happen that, of all places, this should be missing in the Manifesto? We may come perhaps closer to the explanation of this fact when we note another omission in the Manifesto: it says nothing about the American Federation of Labor. Did the Left Wing have any ideas about it? It did. And its main idea was that the A. F. of L. was an organization of the aristocracy and bureaucracy of labor and hence so hopelessly reactionary that it was considered totally out of the sphere of interest and activity of revolutionary Socialists. Thus, while the Manifesto proclaims definitely its position in favor of class struggle industrial unionism, it says nothing about the existing mass trade union movement under reformist leadership. What does this show? It shows (1) that the Left Wing had not yet turned its face to the masses, their organizations and their daily struggles; and (2) that the Left Wing's understanding of the role of the A. F. of L. bureaucracy as the labor lieutenants of the capitalist class was more that of the sectarian Socialist Labor Party (S.L.P.) than that of the Bolshevik Leninists.

On the question of imperialist war, which was the second big issue between the Lefts and the reformists, the Left Wing took a position which was substantially that of the Bolsheviks. The war question played a very important part, perhaps a decisive part, in precipitating the rise and consolidation of the Left Wing. As late as April 1917, the time of the St. Louis Convention of the Socialist Party, the left elements still constituted an undifferentiated mass of many tendencies and shades, running from a relatively developed ideology of revolutionary Socialism to outright centrism. The policy of the official party leadership (Hillquit & Co.), while

social-chauvinist in substance, took the form of a series of maneuvers between outright social-chauvinism and centrism infused with a considerable dose of pacifism. The result was that the St. Louis Convention produced no real division between social-chauvinism and true revolutionary internationalism. This convention was overwhelmingly Left, but in the above-described sense. Only five delegates voted for the Spargo report (open pro-war position); the rest of the votes (172) were distributed between two anti-war resolutions. But what was the nature of these resolutions? While they differed somewhat in form and in minor detail, they were nearly identical in substance, and the substance was a grain of genuine revolutionary opposition to the imperialist war dissolved in a sea of pacifism and reformism. The majority anti-war report, which received 141 votes, was submitted to the convention by Hillquit; the first minority anti-war report, which received 31 votes, was submitted by Boudin. This alone—the fact that these two men were allowed to represent the anti-war position—shows how immature were the views and attitudes of the left elements at the convention. And the resolutions bear that out.

However, soon after the convention things began to move pretty swiftly. There set in a process of rapid differentiation within the Left, an unmasking of the maneuvers of the Hillquit leadership and the beginning of a crystallization of a movement which resulted in the organization of the Left Wing of 1918. This was brought about primarily by the following factors: the open and flagrant betrayal of the St. Louis anti-war resolution by the Hillquit leadership, which was especially glaring in Hillquit's New York Mayoralty campaign in the summer of 1918 and in the pro-war activities of the Socialist aldermen in New York, in the decision of the National Socialist Party Conference to solidarize itself with the social-chauvinist Inter-Allied Socialist Conference, etc.; the beginnings of mass disillusionment with the gigantic swindle of the "war to end war" and to make the world "safe for democracy"; the activities of Lenin and the Bolshevik Party to rally and organize all the true internationalists throughout the world which were beginning to be more widely understood by the class-conscious workers in the United States; and the victory of the Bolshevik revolution in Russia which demonstrated the correctness of the Leninist principle of transforming imperialist war into civil war for the establishment of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

Thus the Left Wing of 1918 not only succeeded in salvaging from the St. Louis resolution the grain of genuine internationalism that it contained but it also developed this further into a revolutionary position along the lines of the Bolshevik point of view.

Closely allied with the war question was the question of international affiliation. Prior to the entry of the United States into the war, the Hillquit leadership of the Socialist Party tried to establish itself in the position of so-called arbiter and peace-maker between the various groups in the Second International. In Hillquit's own words (*Labor Year Book* 1917-1918), the Socialist Party had "preserved an attitude of strict neutrality towards the belligerent powers before our entrance in the war" and had at all times "endeavored to re-unite the Socialist International and to revive it as a factor for lasting peace within and among the nations of the world." The reader will see that this was in essence the position of social-chauvinism dictated at the time by the interests of American imperialism which (through the Wilson administration) was also trying to maintain strict neutrality, seeking to function as "peacemaker" between the warring nations. The Hillquit leadership, until the entrance of the U.S. into the war, was, more or less frankly, trying to serve the interests of its "own" bourgeoisie in the sphere of international relations.

On the other hand, the left elements in the Socialist Party were definitely in sympathy only with the *left elements* in the Second International (Zimmerwald and Kiental). But this sympathy was as yet (before 1918) undifferentiated, with only a relatively small part of the American lefts definitely leaning towards the then extreme left of Zimmerwald and Kiental—the Bolsheviks and their followers. But also on this question the crucial months of 1917-1918 brought in clarity and definiteness in political alignments in the American labor movement. The Left Wing of 1918 came into existence taking its position on international affiliation together with the Bolsheviks, expressing on this question, as on all the other issues, the sentiments of the overwhelming majority of the membership of the Socialist Party.

As a result the Hillquit leadership saw itself compelled to engage in a lot of maneuvers calculated to cheat the party membership and to check the growth of the Left Wing. Hillquit, Oneal & Co. even began to talk of the collapse of the Second International and promised to join in the rebuilding of the International only with such parties as had not been in coalition with the bourgeoisie during the war. Of course, any honest following up of such promises should have led to joining with the Bolsheviks in effecting a complete break with the social-chauvinists and Centrists. But the official leadership of the Socialist Party were only maneuvering and cheating. All the while, they were *in deeds* supporting the policies of Woodrow Wilson (their own bourgeoisie), seeking to "rebuild" the International with the same social-chauvinist and Centrist elements that

had led to the collapse of the Second International in 1914. These maneuvers, of even a more "left" character, they continued also after the formation of the Communist Party in 1919, inasmuch as considerable numbers of the Socialist Party membership, which did not join the Communist movement in 1919 but preferred to stay in the S.P. in the hope of making it more revolutionary, were waveringly but none the less definitely pushing in the direction of the Communist International. It was this wavering group that forced through, at the Socialist Party Convention in September 1919, a resolution "in support of the Third (Moscow) International not because it supports the 'Moscow' programs and methods, but because 'Moscow' is doing something which is really challenging world imperialism" and because "it is proletarian." Considering these very substantial reservations to the program and methods of the Communist International, and considering also the decisive fact that this resolution was being passed at the time when the Left Wing was already organizing itself separately into a Communist Party, the above resolution was objectively playing into the hands of Hillquit & Co., who were using it as a weapon *against* the Communist International, while some of the elements who supported this resolution were subjectively and consciously Centrist. The bulk of this group began to see the truth of this contention only later on when they too broke with the Socialist Party and joined with the Communists (1921).

When the Bolsheviks and their supporters issued the call for the constituent Congress to organize the Communist International, the issue of international affiliation in the Socialist Party came to a head. The Left Wing initiated a referendum in the party on the following proposal: "that the Socialist Party shall participate in an international congress or conference called by, or in which participate, the Communist Party of Russia (Bolshevik) and the Communist Labor Party of Germany (Spartacan)." Because of the sabotage and delay of the Socialist Party bureaucracy, the results of this referendum became known only in May 1919, after the First Congress of the Communist International had already been held (March 1919). The result of this referendum showed that the proposal of the Left Wing was adopted by an overwhelming majority of the members. No wonder Hillquit & Co. did not want to make the result known. It might be relevant to observe in this connection that the reformists who made their main stand upon "Democracy" as against the Dictatorship of the Proletariat were flaunting and violating every rule of inner-party democracy (betraying the St. Louis anti-war resolution, violating the international

affiliation referendum, etc.) in order to make the Socialist Party safe for the democracy of Morgan, Rockefeller & Co.

Thus the three principal issues of the Left Wing against the reformists in the S.P. were the Dictatorship of the Proletariat versus Bourgeois Democracy, revolutionary struggle against imperialist war and proletarian internationalism versus social-chauvinism, and the Communist International versus the Second International. All these issues arose and matured on the background of the general fight of the lefts for the revolutionary class struggle against reformism and class collaboration. In its general fight for class struggle policies and tactics, the Left Wing (especially in its Manifesto) emphasized particularly two points: the Marxian conception of the class struggle as a political struggle and the need of a *revolutionary use* of parliamentary action and the need of class struggle industrial unionism.

It is well known that the reformists in the pre-war Second International had reduced the political struggle of the proletariat merely to parliamentary campaigns, and these campaigns they had reduced to a purely legalistic activity for reforming, that is, strengthening, capitalism. This was also the policy of the official leadership of the Socialist Party. But here the Left Wing was confronted with certain peculiarities in the American labor movement. These were (1) the fact that the dominating labor organizations from the point of view of ideological and political influence among the workers were the trade unions and not the Socialist parties, the A. F. of L. under Gompers being then the most important organization in the trade union field; (2) the fact that the official attitude of the Gompers bureaucracy toward the Socialist Party *as a party* was one of hostility and opposition which, however, did not prevent the closest collaboration of the Socialist trade union bureaucrats with Gompers; (3) the fact that the Hillquit leadership maintained an attitude of Socialist Party non-interference in the affairs of the trade unions which in practice led to collaboration with Gompers which, in its turn, meant collaboration with the capitalists.

The Left Wing sharply challenged the narrow-parliamentary and legalistic conception of political action as well as the official S.P. attitude of "non-interference" in the economic struggles of the workers and their mass organizations. The Manifesto states its position in the following way:

"We assert with Marx that 'the class struggle is essentially a political struggle' and we can only accept his own oft-repeated interpretation of that phrase. The class struggle, whether it manifests itself on the industrial field or in the direct struggle for governmental control, is essentially a struggle for the capture and destruc-

tion of the capitalist state. This is a political act. In this broader view of the term 'political', Marx includes revolutionary industrial action. In other words, the objective of Socialist industrial action is 'political' in the sense that it aims to undermine the bourgeois state which 'is nothing less than a machine for the oppression of one class by another and that no less so in a democratic republic than in a monarchy'."

On the question of parliamentary action, which the Manifesto considers only as one phase of political action and not the most important one, it says the following:

"It (parliamentary action) must at all times struggle to arouse the revolutionary mass action of the proletariat—its use is both agitational and obstructive. It must on all issues wage war upon capitalism and the state. Revolutionary socialism uses the forums of parliament for agitation but it does not intend to and cannot use the bourgeois state as a means of introducing socialism; this bourgeois state must be destroyed by the mass action of the revolutionary proletariat. The proletarian dictatorship in the form of a Soviet State is the immediate objective of the class struggle."

These rather lengthy quotations are reproduced here for the reason that they show the weak as well as the strong sides of the Left Wing. It is clear that the general trend of the lefts on these issues was away from reformism and towards Bolshevism. The central Marxist-Leninist idea is here: that the class struggle is a struggle for the Dictatorship of the Proletariat and that the revolutionary party of the proletariat must organize and direct all the daily manifestations of the class struggle from this point of view. Thus, the issue with reformism was drawn clearly, but not clearly enough. The Left Wing lacked the correct Leninist conception of the *dialectics* of the class struggle and of the role of the Party in it.

On the dialectics of the class struggle. The Left Wing correctly emphasized the primacy of mass action, insisting that all the forms of activity of the revolutionary party of the workers be subordinated to the end of arousing and organizing the struggles of the masses against their exploiters. But the Left Wing did not sufficiently understand that revolutionary mass action does not spring out all ready-made to conform to some pattern previously drawn up. The Left Wing did not seem to realize that revolutionary mass action grows out only of the real living issues of the class struggle, as it develops day by day, that these issues are varied and manifold (sometimes big and sometimes apparently "small"), and that, depending upon the objective and subjective factors, these daily struggles will jump up very rapidly to higher forms of mass action or they may not rise higher at all or develop more slowly.

On the role of the party. Here again the Left Wing correctly emphasized the Leninist idea of the primacy of the Party as the

leader of all proletarian struggles (without, however, showing any understanding of the role of the Party as the leader of all oppressed: toiling farmers and Negroes). But what was to be the role of the Party *concretely* in the daily struggles of the masses for their *partial demands*? How was the Party to deepen and widen these struggles into political and revolutionary mass action? To this the Left Wing gave no answer or rather it gave the wrong answer. The Manifesto says: "It is the task of a revolutionary socialist party to direct the struggles of the proletariat and provide a program for the culminating crisis". The reference here is to the revolutionary crisis and the struggle for power, and the assumption here is that the American proletariat will get to this stage merely by the party carrying on *agitation* for its program. But how? The Leninist idea of revolutionary agitation is that it be carried on on the basis of concrete struggles for specific demands and that in the course of these struggles the Party aims to widen and deepen their political content, organizing the masses, organizing the Party, thus leading the masses up, *on the basis of their own experience*, to higher forms of revolutionary mass action. The Left Wing had no such idea. As already pointed out, it had a non-dialectical conception of the class struggle and it suffered greatly from an underestimation of the role of the Party as the organizer and leader of the daily struggles of the masses as well as the *organizer* of the proletarian revolution.

These weaknesses made themselves felt very strongly in the position of the Left Wing on trade union questions. Here the Left Wing sought to combat the craft and "pure and simple" trade unionism of the Gompers bureaucracy in the A. F. of L., on the one hand, and the official S. P. non-interference but practical collaboration with the Gompers bureaucracy, on the other hand. To accomplish this aim, the Left Wing formulated the following position: "Industrial unionism, the organization of the proletariat in accordance with the integration of industry and for the overthrow of capitalism, is a necessary phase of revolutionary Socialist agitation". But in taking this position the Left Wing did not rise much above the traditional, that is, sectarian policies of industrial unionism as practiced by the dominating element in the I.W.W. (Industrial Workers of the World) and in the S.L.P. (Socialist Labor Party). To be sure, the Left Wing was largely free (not fully) of the syndicalist conception of industrial unionism, but the sectarian understanding of it was there. The correct fight for industrial unionism in the United States called for a policy of active participation in the American Federation of Labor (the largest mass trade union organization), the systematic building of a left wing

within it and participation in and leadership of the daily economic and other struggles of the workers against their exploiters. But this is not what the Left Wing was proposing to do. Its full proposal on this question in the Manifesto reads as follows:

“Realizing that a political party cannot reorganize and reconstruct the industrial organizations of the working class, and that that is the task of the economic organizations themselves, we demand that the Party assist this process of reorganization by a propaganda for revolutionary industrial unionism as part of its general activities. We believe it is the mission of the Socialist movement to encourage and assist the proletariat to adopt newer and more effective forms of organization and to stir it into newer and more revolutionary modes of action.”

The A. F. of L. is not in the picture at all. The Party is called upon to fight for industrial unionism only by means of general propaganda. The fight for industrial unionism is conceived as more or less of an organizational problem instead of as an organic part of the general revolutionization of the working class and its mass organizations and the struggle against the reformist trade union leaders. It will also be seen from the above quotation that the Left Wing was not yet completely free of the Hillquit policy of “non-interference” in the trade unions, for that is the meaning of the statement that “a political party cannot reorganize and reconstruct the industrial organizations of the working class”. Trying to avoid the pitfalls of S.L.P. sectarianism, the Left Wing failed to break altogether with the official S. P. opportunism on the trade union question.

It is apparent that Lenin’s advice on this question to the Socialist Propaganda League of America (1915) was either unknown to the Left Wing of 1918 or so little understood that it made no mark on its policies. Lenin endorsed the position of the lefts against craft unions and for industrial unions. But seeing the mechanical and sectarian twist which the issue is receiving in the U.S., Lenin finds it necessary to urge “the most active participation of all Party members in the economic struggle and in *all* the trade unions and co-operative organizations of the workers”. The emphasis upon the word “all” is Lenin’s and the meaning is clear: fight for industrial unionism by participating in the economic struggles of the masses and by working in all unions, no matter how reactionary their leadership. This meant primarily the unions of the American Federation of Labor. This advice of Lenin became effective in the American labor movement only in later years, subsequent to the organization and unification of the Communist movement and with the rise of the trade union left wing (the Trade Union Educational League headed by Foster), under the guidance of the Communist

International and of the Red International of Labor Unions.

From the above it will be understood how the Left Wing came to adopt a very sectarian and ultra-left position on the question of partial demands generally. The Left Wing correctly centered its attack upon the reformism of the S. P. leadership, pointing out the "social-reform" character of the S. P. program and platforms as well as its practices. This was a move in the direction of Bolshevism, which move at the time drew a pretty clear line of demarcation between the opportunists and revolutionary Socialists. But unlike the Bolsheviks, who always formulated partial demands for mass struggles and through these led the masses to higher struggles and to the seizure of power, the Left Wing ruled out partial demands altogether. Here we have a case of the Left Wing trying to extricate itself from the opportunist morass of the S. P. and falling into the sectarian pit of the S.L.P. (which also ruled out partial demands). The Left Wing position was that "the Party must teach, propagate and agitate *exclusively* for the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of Socialism through a proletarian dictatorship" (Our emphasis—A. B.). This attitude, which the Left Wing carried over into the Communist movement, proved one of the main obstacles to the growth of our Party in the first years after its formation.

The social-fascist slanderers of our movement (Oneal & Co.) like to insist that the Communists in later years became more "moderate" for a while, incorporating into their programs and platforms the same social-reform planks for which the S. P. leadership was attacked as opportunist in 1918-1919. What the social-fascists pretend not to understand is this, that on the question of partial demands (as on many others) the Communist movement of the United States was developing *from left Socialism toward Bolshevism*. What appears to the social-fascists as a *return* by the Communists to S. P. social-reform practices is in reality *a more radical break with opportunism*, right and "left", for underestimation of partial demands and struggles in the Leninist sense is an expression of opportunism covered with left phrases; what actually took place in the Communist movement, and is still taking place, but on a higher plane, is a process of freeing itself from opportunism and sectarianism and an ever closer approach to Bolshevism, not alone in theory but also in the daily practice of mass revolutionary activity. In this process the Communist movement is learning to carry on the Bolshevik struggle against opportunism on two fronts, right and "left", which the Left Wing did not understand.

The Left Wing also took issue with the reformists on the question of the role of the Party and its organizational structure.

But on this question the Left Wing attacked only the most obvious faults of the organization, such as its loose petty-bourgeois structure, the lack of a single political line obligatory for every Party unit and member, the fact that the Party press and educational institutions were run as the private domain of individual "prominent" Socialists rather than as Party institutions under Party control and also the fact that the leading organs of the Party were totally *irresponsible* before the Party membership, violating time and again the expressed wishes of the membership, since these wishes were opposed to the opportunism of the S.P. official leadership. The Left Wing demanded a correction of these opportunist abuses but it had not yet risen to the understanding that a true revolutionary working-class party must be a *different type of party* in respect to its leading role in the class struggle in all its forms, in its relation to the non-Party mass organizations as the Party's transmission belt to the working class, the principle of democratic centralism, the primacy of the shop structure of organization, Bolshevik discipline, etc. Thus, one might say that the Left Wing only signalized the need of a new type of Party without going much further, mainly because it was not yet fully free from the influence of right and "left" opportunism, the most decisive expression of which on this question was a considerable degree of faith in the *opportunist theory of spontaneity*. We have already seen above that the Left Wing assigned to the Party only an agitational role in the daily struggles of the masses *prior* to the emergence of a revolutionary crisis, and that only with the arrival of the revolutionary crisis does the Party step in as the real organizer and leader of the fight—which is the fight for power. In other words, the maturing of the revolutionary crisis on its subjective side was conceived largely as a spontaneous development. Hence the inability of the Left Wing to come closer to Leninism on the question of the role of the Party and its structure.

To conclude with the subject of issues between the Left Wing of 1918 and the reformist leadership of the S. P., it is important to point out at least two of the more fundamental issues which were practically not raised by the Left Wing. These are the Negro question and the agrarian-farmer question. These omissions will seem today even more astounding when we consider the fact that the Left Wing did place the struggle for power and the dictatorship of the proletariat in the very center of its theoretical and political fight against the opportunists, showing thereby the influence of Leninism. Then how could the Left Wing fail to raise the question of the *allies* of the proletariat in the United States—the nationally oppressed Negro masses and the toiling farmers? Besides, many of the implications of the Negro question were at the time

(1918-1919) manifesting themselves acutely in the class struggle and in the unions (Chicago stockyards) where the left elements of the A. F. of L. under Foster were grappling with these problems trying to find a solution for them. Under these conditions, the failure of the Left Wing to raise the Negro and agrarian questions would show that the Left Wing ideology was still largely dominated by reformism and sectarianism: it took over from the S. P. leadership its ignoring of the Negro and farmer questions, which to reformists could not appear as basic problems of the proletarian struggle for power; it also took over some of the narrow craft ideology, especially of the reformists in the unions, which cannot see the working class as *a class* leading the fight against the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie in alliance with and supported by the Negro masses and the toiling farmers; while its purely agitational attitude to the class struggle, and general sectarian approach, prevented it from feeling and evaluating the pressure of these issues that was coming from the daily struggles of the masses.

#### THE ORGANIZATIONAL BREAK WITH THE SOCIALIST PARTY OPPORTUNISTS

From its very inception, the Left Wing realized that its task was to bring about a complete break with the opportunists in the S. P., not only ideologically and politically but also organizationally. While theoretically the Left Wing (with the exception of its most advanced elements) was rather hazy on the especially dangerous role at the time of centrism, in practice the fight was developed for the organizational break also with the centrists.

In effect the organizational break with the opportunists began to take place immediately after the organization of the Left Wing while it still was formally a part of the Socialist Party. Moreover, as left groups were becoming crystallized in various language sections, cities and branches of the party, which took place throughout 1918, these groups were practically ignoring the opportunist and social-chauvinist policies of the official leadership and were carrying on their agitation and other mass work more or less in accord with their own view of revolutionary Socialism. This occurred especially on such issues as the war, international affiliations, the Bolshevik revolution in Russia (and later the proletarian revolution in Germany), the left groups undertaking to carry out in practice their own point of view even before there was a national left wing organization and a national program. And wherever they did so, the left elements had the expressed overwhelming support of the party membership. Whatever truly revolutionary and internationalist work was carried on by the Socialists of the United States at that

time, was carried on *despite* the official S. P. leadership (Hillquit and Co.) and not because of it.

But on the question of how soon and in what form the complete and *formal* break with the S. P. opportunists should take place, there soon developed in the Left Wing serious differences of opinion. These differences came to sharp expression at the first National Left Wing Conference, held in New York, in June, 1919. One section of the delegates stood out for the immediate (or as soon as practically possible) convocation of a national convention of all Left Wing elements for the purpose of organizing the Communist Party of America, while another section favored a slower and more flexible mode of procedure calculated to win for the Communist Party also the more backward and hesitating elements of the S. P. This is not the place to discuss elaborately these differences, except to point out the following: that it was a difference of tactics, and not of principle as some of the Left Wing delegates were inclined to think at the time. Both sections had given unmistakable proof of their determination to break formally with the opportunists and to organize the Communist Party. But one section of the Left Wing proceeded from the belief that the formal break with the opportunists had been delayed long enough, that there was no hope of the Left Wing securing formal control of the S. P. organization for the purpose of transforming it into a Communist Party because of the wholesale expulsions carried on by the Hillquit leadership, and that the hesitant left elements who would not join in the organization of the Communist Party at once were either no good or would come to the Party later. The other section was not at all sure that the formal break had been delayed but was agreed that the time for the break had already arrived. However, it argued that considerable numbers of party members among the native-born workers, although in general sympathy with the left elements, were not yet ready for a formal break, but that they would be won over soon to this step when it became more obvious to them that it was the Hillquit bureaucracy that was splitting the party and not the Left Wing. Hence they proposed a slower and less direct course which also led to the organization of the Communist Party in the United States. These differences, which might have been composed if not completely eliminated, were aggravated, however, by disagreements on the question of language federations in the party, and also by a certain degree of factionalism. The result was a split in the Left Wing, each side proceeding to carry out its points of view.

There is this to be said on the question that is revelant even

today. The formal break with the opportunists in the S. P. *was delayed*. Had there been in the United States, during the war and especially in the crucial years of 1918-1919, a strong revolutionary working class party—a Leninist party—the mobilization of the deep and powerful mass upsurge of the American workers of that period would have given the class struggle in the United States an entirely different turn. And the upsurge was not confined to the workers alone but was arousing also the Negro masses and the toiling farmers in various degrees. One cannot say whether or not a revolutionary situation would have developed in the United States in the first period of post-war capitalism had there been a strong revolutionary workers' party, but its absence certainly militated against the revolutionary advance which was objectively being prepared and this absence of a revolutionary party is directly traceable to the *historically delayed* break of the revolutionary elements from the opportunists in the Socialist movement.

From this, however, it does not follow that in the month of June, 1919, the tactic of immediate break was the best. Certainly, when both sections of the Left Wing were finally agreed that by September (the time of the emergency convention of the S. P.) the formal break would have to be consummated, and when mass sentiment inside and outside of the party was continually rising in favor of the Left Wing, the more flexible tactics proposed for the winning of the still hesitant elements, especially among the native-born workers, were correct and in no way militated against the Left Wing widening its independent revolutionary work among the masses outside of the S. P. Both could have and should have been combined. Failure to realize this resulted in a split and in the formation of two Communist Parties in September, 1919,—the Communist Party and the Communist Labor Party.

Thus the formal break with the opportunists in the S. P. became consummated and the basis laid for the building of a mass Communist Party in the United States. Both Communist conventions demonstrated in their deliberations and programs considerably more clarity in their understanding of Leninism and its application in this country than did the Left Wing. In the programs adopted by these conventions we already find *the beginnings* of an understanding of the importance of partial struggles, of their dialectics, and of their relation to the preparation of the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat. We also find there a fuller understanding of the role of the Communist Party as the leader of these struggles, a closer approach to the practical problems of the class struggle and of trade union work. In other words, the conventions which formed the Communist Party and Communist Labor Party took one

more step away from left Socialism and towards Communism.

As already pointed out in the opening paragraphs of this article, the historic role of the Left Wing of 1918-1919 consisted in this, that it served as a bridge for the class conscious workers of the United States from vague left Socialism and general proletarian militancy to the solid foundations of Leninism. This process of development was by no means completed at the first Communist conventions but has been going on continuously in the Communist movement throughout its history. Only with each succeeding period in the class struggle, old problems appeared in a *new form*, new and stronger forces were being developed within our movement for the successful solution of these problems, the general class struggle and our Party with it rising to higher levels of revolutionary advance. This is the struggle for the Bolshevization of our Party.

The question may be raised as to whether the present "left" Socialist tendencies are fulfilling the same role as the Left Wing of 1918. The answer is this: far from playing the same role, they are playing the *opposite role*. Where the Left Wing of 1918 was a bridge to Communism, the present "left" Socialists, whether those in the S. P. or the Musteites, are actually building a dam *against* Communism. This does not mean that the rank and file proletarian elements in the S. P. who incline towards the left and the working class elements of the Muste movement are following their "left" reformist leaders because they (the rank and file) want a dam against Communism. Not at all. Rather these reformist leaders put on a "left" coloring in order to stop this rank and file from moving further to the left, that is, to Communism. Let us make no mistake about it. The rank and file of the reformist organizations—Socialist and trade union—is genuinely moving to the left—to the Communist Party and to class struggle unionism. Not all of them are as yet conscious of where they are going; some of them still have many bourgeois prejudices against Communism instilled into their minds primarily by the "left" reformists and most especially by the Musteites; but if this rank and file is ever to have what it is looking for—class struggle and a true working class party—it will inevitably come to Communism. Of course, if we leave uncombated the activities of the "left" Socialists and the Musteites, if we don't expose them systematically and in the course of the class struggle, with the United Front policy, as "left" social-fascists, and if we don't prove in practice the correctness of our line and our ability to put it into effect, Muste and Co. may succeed to an extent in delaying and obstructing the drift to Communism. Hence, the great significance of the Open Letter and the need of its earnest and speedy execution.

# Through Concentration to a Mass Proletarian Party

By F. BROWN

IT is only with a full understanding of the Open Letter, which characterizes with thoroughgoing critical analysis and places with full clarity the central tasks before us, that we shall be able to solve successfully the fundamental organizational problems that confront us.

There is no doubt that the Open Letter is a document of the utmost importance, the line of which, *consciously applied into practice*, will really enable the Party to make the necessary turn.

Those comrades, and there are such, who still claim that the Open Letter does not contain anything new, manifest complete confusion, and are in the category of those elements who will not help to carry out the Open Letter, but on the contrary will become a hindrance with which the Party will have to deal very sharply.

Of course, the problem of building a *mass proletarian Party*, the central point of the Open Letter, and the *problem of concentration* rising as a natural consequence, are not new. What is really new, however, is that this fundamental political and organizational problem of the Bolshevik Party has remained with us merely a theory echoed on occasion as a magic formula for solving all problems. What is new in the Open Letter is, first, that it is a document in which the theory, the perspectives, are combined with the organizational measures to be taken in solving the tasks set; second, that by its clarity, sharpness and conciseness, it raises before the Party the central task to be solved. Another important feature of the Open Letter, and in some respects this is also new in our Party, is the simplicity and directness with which the immediate tasks are connected with the perspective in the light of the Leninist theory of the mass proletarian Party, in the light of the theory of proletarian hegemony in the revolutionary struggle. It is the grasp of this theory that brings to the consciousness of the Party the urgent need for concentration, that spurs the entire Party—composed of so many new elements—to mass activity.

What is the fundamental problem emphasized in the Open Letter? The problem of building a *mass proletarian Party*. In this very conception, in these three words, is contained the funda-

mental political and organizational task before us; the necessity of building a mass Party, which is the problem of quantity, and the necessity of developing its proletarian character and composition, the other phase of the problem, namely, that of quality.

If we analyze the composition of the Party as it stands today, we immediately see that our Party is not yet a mass Party, and though it is proletarian in character and composition, we cannot say that the proletarian elements from the basic industries are predominant.

If this question is clear, then we must also understand the problem of concentration as the means through which to build a mass proletarian Party. Understanding the "why" will teach us the "how".

It is through concentration, through throwing the whole weight of the Party into shop work, that the Party will win over the best elements among the workers in the industries, factories, mills and mines, that the Party will succeed in establishing shop nuclei and thereby link itself with large masses of the American proletariat at the points of production.

As it now stands our shop nuclei can be counted on our fingers. This, by the way, explains our weakness at this moment in taking the lead over the numerous struggles going on against the Recovery Act, especially in the basic industries. This also explains our weakness in bringing forward the Party before the large masses in the basic industries. It explains our bringing the Party forward as an outsider instead of an inside organizing and fighting force.

At this point, for the better understanding of the main problem which confronts us, it is necessary for a moment to take into consideration our final aim, the overthrow of the capitalist system and the establishment of a workers' and farmers' government, the dictatorship of the proletariat as a transitional period for the building of the classless society.

There is the proletariat, the class that is composed of the productive forces of the capitalist society, product of the capitalist system, upon which has fallen the historic mission of overthrowing capitalism. And it is the Communist Party, composed of the most class-conscious elements of the proletariat, rich with the experiences of the revolutionary movement, and armed with the Marxist-Leninist theory, that has the mission of raising the consciousness of the proletariat to its hegemonic role in the revolutionary struggle and of leading the working class towards its final goal.

The Party will be able to accomplish this task by leading the daily struggles of the workers, by politicizing these struggles, by establishing itself as the only leader of the working class in its

struggle for total emancipation from capitalist exploitation. This explains the reason *why* we must build a mass proletarian Party.

The question now is how to accomplish it in practice, how to establish the Party as the only leader of the working class, how to win over the large masses of workers under the influence of the Party, how to organize them, how to organize the agrarian workers side by side with the industrial workers, how to win over as allies the broad masses of the poor farmers, and how to neutralize the petty-bourgeois elements of the city and countryside.

Such tremendous tasks cannot be accomplished at once. The first prerequisite is the rooting of the Party in hundreds of factories, mills and mines—in the basic industries where the masses are concentrated—in daily conflict with the system that is exploiting their collective work. It is in the places of work that the daily struggles are awakening the class-consciousness of the masses. It is here that we find fertile soil to draw the most conscious of them into the ranks of the Party. It is here that the vanguard of the working class must primarily develop and lead the struggles against the capitalist system.

Now, can we at once penetrate all factories, mills and mines? Yes. We can reach masses with our propaganda and agitation that will fertilize the soil for organization. But the first prerequisite is to start in selected, strategic points and to develop a movement in these points which will spread to new places.

Here we enter into the real problem of concentration. To make it clearer, let us make a comparison. It is known how the Bolsheviks led by Lenin in the early days of the Bolshevik movement, patiently and consistently concentrated in the industrial centers such as Petrograd, Moscow, the Urals, Don Basin, Baku; how they concentrated in these centers in specific factories. There the groups were formed who learned how to establish the Party as the leader in the particular mills or mines through leading the struggles of the workers for their daily demands, politicizing these struggles, combining the struggles for the demands in the factories with the struggles for better housing conditions, with municipal problems, etc. It is from the selected places of concentration where the Bolshevik Party established itself as the leader of the workers that the influence of the Bolshevik Party spread to new factories in the territories of concentration. It was from Petrograd, the Urals, Moscow that the influence and the Party organization spread to the rest of the country. The struggles led by the Bolsheviks in these industrial centers were revolutionizing the Russian toiling masses. It was from these centers that the Bolshevik propaganda and organization reached also the masses of the poor peasants.

Looking into the history of the victorious October Revolution, we can see how the proletariat of the industrial centers where the Bolsheviks persistently concentrated for years in spite of persecution, terror, illegality, became the driving force in the revolution and how *precisely the victorious proletariat in these centers* (Petrograd, Moscow, Urals, later on in Donbas, Baku), closely allied with the large masses of the poor peasantry, was the determining factor of the final victory over capitalism.

Who were the numerous leaders of the fighting masses in those days, the heroes of the titanic struggle for the overthrow of capitalism, the heroes of the many battles of the Civil War, of the reconstruction period? The Bolsheviks grew out of the ranks of the steel workers, of the textile workers, of the miners. *The victorious October Revolution* was the fruit of a clear understanding of the problem of the proletarian revolution and of the dictatorship of the proletariat combined with a systematic concentration activity for years as the practical application of the Leninist conception of the mass proletarian Party.

In the light of the Bolshevik method of concentration let us analyze our concentration activities of the past. If we look at the status of our Party at this moment, at the forces around the Party, we can state that the small results achieved in the major centers are a product of what little concentration work we have done. To some extent our Party developed in four or five of the major industrial centers precisely because of our concentration work in the mobilization and organization of the unemployed, in certain mining fields, in the auto industry, etc. However, if we look with clear eyes at the masses in motion, at the battering waves against the Recovery Act, and at the spontaneous struggles taking place all over the country, we see that, in spite of its growing influence, our Party is not yet able to take leadership in the hundreds of struggles. In order to catch up with the situation, we must speed up the tempo of the building of the Party into a mass proletarian Party, rooted in the places of work and especially in the basic industries.

If we look at the past results of our Party in the light of the Open Letter, in spite of the fact that in the last period we can register some advances in influence and also in organizational results—let the bourgeois press and the renegades rejoice at the so-called “bankruptcy” and failure of our movement!—we must admit, however, and we are not hiding it, that the Party was unable to utilize to the full extent the splendid opportunities of the objective situation.

It was not that the perspective of the Party was wrong, but that we did not follow up a systematic policy of concentration. We followed the old tradition in being all over, jumping from place to

place, and more particularly, where we started to concentrate some time ago, we lacked persistency.

While leading hundreds of struggles for the daily demands of the working class we did not succeed (we shall deal with the reason later) in raising the consciousness, especially of the thousands of new members, to our fundamental task, the building of a mass proletarian Party rooted in the factories.

Our laxity in arousing the lower units, the shop nuclei, to the task that they should perform, weakened the persistence in our concentration activities, gave to our efforts at concentration a mechanical form expressed in the phrase "We tried hard but we did not succeed."

Here we must stress again: not that we did not know the method of concentration, but that the great role of concentration in the basic industries was not fully understood by the whole Party.

Certainly we don't lack experiences in concentration work. They are here under our very eyes. Certainly the Party districts of Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago, New York are rich with them. But the trouble is that they are not studied, consequently, they are not popularized as a means of strengthening the whole Party. We learn very little from the experiences of the Bolshevik Party and other sections of the Communist International; we learn very little from our own experiences.

So we discover already the fundamental reasons that hindered us in the past from building the Party into a mass proletarian Party, and in doing so we indicate also the way to overcome these hindrances.

However, the reasons pointed out are not the only ones. There are still other weaknesses that must be overcome, other problems and tasks to be solved that will enable us to carry out the Open Letter in practice.

These are the problems and tasks closely connected, inter-related and rising out of the process of concentration. Upon their prompt solution depends the tempo in building a mass Party.

These are the problems of strengthening the leadership of the Party as a whole; of developing new cadres and correctly utilizing the old; of building sections and developing section leadership, of developing local leaders in the industrial centers, of collective work from the top down and vice versa, of inner democracy, of discussions which raise the consciousness of the Party toward its tasks, of planned work and control, of cutting down the numerous inner meetings that hinder the concrete mass work, of systematic recruiting, etc., etc.

All these questions are phases of the broad problem of the inner life of our Party.

Unquestionably the demand for leading forces is increasing with the growth of the influence and organizational strength of the Party, and in this respect the Central Committee, the district buros, the section buros, are pressed from all sides. While it is true that in the last few years many of the old leading forces that went over into the camp of the renegades have been replaced by new forces grown out of the struggles, our cadres are still very limited.

Being realistic, we do not forget that our Party is operating in the strongest of capitalist countries, covering an immense territory, with some of the districts of our Party larger than Central and Western Europe combined, and some of our sections covering the area of European states. In many sections of the East especially we find such industrial concentration that can be compared only with the highly-developed industrial regions of the largest European countries.

Now, what are our qualified leading forces? I do not speak of the situation in the hundreds of industrial centers—Youngstown, Akron, Canton, Warren, Lorraine, in Ohio; or Johnstown, McKeesport, Allentown, Reading, in Pennsylvania, scattered over such an immense territory—but in the centers of districts that identify themselves with such industrial colossi as Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, Pittsburgh and others, capitals of industrial empires. We know how limited are the leading forces, restricted to few comrades on whom rests the tremendous responsibility of guiding the Party as a whole, the manifold phases of Party work in these areas, of guiding the sections, etc. We know further how the leading capable forces are still more limited in the vast sections. Moreover, we know how our best will in giving personal guidance is hindered by the hundreds of miles which many times separate the sections from the center of the districts and the units from the section leadership. And, in addition, the big traveling expenses required.

It is because of the weak forces and the weak understanding of the concentration policy, that until recently the district leadership especially was forced by the various situations—struggles breaking out here and there from one end of the district to the other—to jump from place to place. There was no district plenum, no section plenum at which the leading comrades did not have to report on their forced flying trips, here to give guidance to a strike, there to straighten out some bad situation, and elsewhere to take leadership of some unemployed struggle. Because of this situation, because of the low degree of initiative and independence of the basic units, because of the weakness of the local forces in the industrial centers,

many of our leading comrades came to look upon themselves as indispensable in all situations. Thus the initiative from below was choked and the development of the local forces into leadership was prevented.

Viewing the situation concretely, we see at once that the problem of concentration is closely connected with the problem of the development of new cadres, of local leadership, with the problem of strengthening the section leadership, the closest to the lower units, acting in the industries or on a neighborhood basis.

The experiences of the last years show us in the most self-evident manner that the leading forces are growing out of the struggles (never in the history of our Party were so many leading forces developed as in the last few years) that these forces can be trained further through national and district training courses. These experiences show us the correct path to be followed. The vital problem of cadres will be solved in the course of developing struggles in the concentration districts, by penetrating the basic industries, winning over the best forces of the American working class and by a more intensive schooling of the best elements, a more intensive education of the whole Party. *Today we are confronted with the problem of developing not hundreds, but thousands of new forces, with the problem of making each individual Party member a leader.*

This problem, again, is linked with another of vital importance, namely, the development of our press, primarily the *Daily Worker*, with the increase by the thousands of literature and leaflets, the instruments of raising the Party consciousness for penetrating the American toiling masses; with the problem of improving the technical apparatus of the sections and units which must reach the point of acting more independently in issuing their own material of agitation and propaganda in the territory in which they function. It is closely connected with the problem of collective work that must unite the comrades in their common purpose of reaching certain goals, which must unite their efforts, coordinate their activities in such a manner that division of work among them shall not mean splitting the work, but coordination. Collective work from the top down, Bolshevik self-criticism, self-correction as a lever for constructive work, combined with discussion of problems facing the Party, will not only raise the activities of the Party but will establish a sounder inner democracy and will spur the initiative of our basic units.

The Open Letter emphasized, too, the problem of planned work and control tasks. This is one of the keys to the solution of the main questions before us. Only through planned work shall we be able to systematize and coordinate our activities, to mobilize all forces

in a definite direction for the reaching of set objectives, and to develop persistence in achieving the aims set in the plans. *The control tasks flowing out of the plans will serve as the systematic check-up on results, and will control every step in the direction of the concretization of the plan.*

Here again we can take an illustration given us by the Bolshevik Party: the tremendous development of the socialist industrialization of the Soviet Union (which does not find comparison in any country in the history of the world) is the result of planned work. A plan of work, Bolshevik determination and continuous check-up, brought the accomplishment of the Five-Year Plan in four years. Was the method of planning new to the Bolsheviks in 1928, when the foundation of the Plan was laid? It was not. It was through planned work that the Bolshevik Party throughout all its history went from victory to victory, was able in certain periods to retreat with small losses and coordinate its forces for new advances, was able to smash its enemies, consolidating the revolution. It was by planning that the Bolsheviks led to the accomplishments of the reconstruction period, that they laid down the basis for the socialist industrialization of the country. It was through planned work that the basis for the collectives was laid, so that today this tremendous task is on the way to full and successful accomplishment.

The Bolshevik Party, under the leadership of Lenin and later under the leadership of his best disciple, Stalin, reviewed at its conventions and plenums the results of past work, laying new plans and control tasks for its future activities.

While deciding upon the new plans, the Party was at the same time orientating the masses of the Soviet Union toward the set goal, toward their specific tasks. Holding the steering wheel firmly in its hands in the direction of the goal, all the transmission belts were put into motion—Party apparatus, government apparatus, Soviets, trade unions, cooperatives and other mass organizations, the press and literature as formidable agitational instruments—to move strongly forward on the road of the plan, to carry it into practice. Once on the way, the control tasks serve to check up the results step by step, to discover the weaknesses, to get the necessary readjustments, to take measures for overcoming the obstacles.

All energies are concentrated in the common effort. The carrying out of the plan with its multiple phases is a collective undertaking. Bolshevik self-criticism is not a simple critique of weakness, but the Bolshevik analytic method of discovering weaknesses and pointing out simultaneously the measures for overcoming them, the determination, the will to do it, the method of self-correction with

the aim of strengthening the consciousness of the tasks to be performed.

Did we follow the Bolshevik example of planning, of concentrating our energies on the tasks flowing out of the plans? Are we taking the steps necessary to raise the understanding of the whole Party to the significance of the plan, to the tasks elaborated at our conventions and plenums?

We did this only to some extent. In our conventions and plenums we worked out plans, set goals. But at the next plenum or convention we had to admit that we were still in the same groove.

It was not because the plans were wrong, the objectives impossible to be reached. Our major weakness of the past lay in the fact that our conventions and plenums were not followed up, that the Party was not mobilized and made conscious of the plans, of the next tasks, that no check-up was made, no control exercised. It amounted to planning for planning's sake, not for fulfillment.

It is enough to go over the Party press in the periods of conventions, plenums and in the period immediately following them. The plenums are recorded, the resolutions printed. But there is not the effort of raising an intense discussion on the decisions that should have stirred and orientated the whole Party on the line laid down, that should have moved the Party to act.

We can state that in this respect the Extraordinary Conference of July 1933, and the Open Letter to the Party, are a vigorous step forward along the Bolshevik method of planning and concentration. Today the Open Letter does not remain the property only of leading committees. It is reaching the base of the Party, is starting to move the Party forward.

Every district and section today is working out its plan of work on the basis of the Open Letter. The immediate important task of the moment is to concretize the plan in practice, to check on every step, always having the main tasks before us. The next plenum will have to check up the total results, discover the weaknesses and mobilize the Party for the next steps.

At the same time we must break away from the numerous mechanical inner meetings that hinder our mass work. Here I mean especially the unit meetings with dozens of points on the agenda that prevent the discussion of vital political problems, that divide the work in a mechanical manner. This is so particularly because of the lack of initiative on the part of the unit buros, who are not yet established as the leading organs of the basic units.

This shortcoming can be overcome by making the individual member conscious that every phase of work is not something separate

but, on the contrary, part of a whole. The buro can help in this by the preparation of the agenda and proposals on the assignments, through special discussion meetings on important problems that can take the form of section membership meetings where possible, or unit meetings, this to be accomplished with the help of the section and district leadership.

Today more than ever we must solve the fundamental political and organizational problem of the Party, the Bolshevization process, the reorganization of our Party on the basis of shop nuclei. This problem has been discussed for years, and there are libraries that contain the experiences on this question—not only on an international scale but also dealing with this country. In this respect we furthermore failed to learn from the experiences of the Ford nucleus, the Sparrows Point nucleus, the McKeesport Tin Plate, the Westinghouse, the experiences of the mining nuclei, the Chicago stockyard nucleus, etc., etc. And because of this, we were not persistent in reorganizing the Party on the basis of shop nuclei. The whole Party has to be permeated by the correct conception of what a shop nucleus and unit are, namely, the Party in a specific shop, in a specific territory, as the leader of the masses. Only through extending the network of our shop nuclei, following the method of concentration, shall we succeed in anchoring the Party in hundreds of shops and mines in the basic industries. With our shop nuclei leading the daily struggles, winning the confidence of the masses in the places of work, in the neighborhoods, we shall establish ourselves as a general staff of the working class battalions. Also at this point we have to keep before our eyes our final aims, the conquest of power, because in understanding the need of building shop nuclei, we will build with persistence. By establishing the Party as the leader in concentration places, in the basic industries, we are making the first steps on the road to power.

It is through the development of the daily struggle, under the leadership of the shop nuclei, of the units, through raising the consciousness of the masses, that we will draw into the ranks of the vanguard the best elements, and our shop nuclei, limited today to a few comrades, will become mass shop nuclei. The units acting on a neighborhood basis will become mass units. The Party will become a mass Party rooted in the factories. The daily, systematic recruiting of the best elements of the working class into our ranks is an imperative task for the solution of our main problem.

Today there are thousands of American workers willing to join our ranks, that look to our Party as the champion in the struggle for the improvement of the working class conditions and for the final liberation of the proletariat. These workers enter the

Party with enthusiasm, are the most active, and immediately recruit new members. After a while, however, these elements to a great extent become discouraged. From inside the Party looks different to them than it appeared from without. The inner life permeated by sectarianism, bureaucratism and mechanical routine work is spoiling their enthusiasm. The "why" that brought them to join our ranks is not followed by continuous explanation of the "why" of the many tasks with which they are shouldered; to transform them from mere fighters for better conditions to Communists.

It is only through the improvement of the inner life of the Party, through self-correction of the older Party members that accept this criticism in theory, but in practice are still following the old traditions, that fluctuation will diminish. Then the thousands entering the Party will remain in our ranks.

What we need is a ruthless struggle against the old traditions and methods that in practice are submerging the new ones, a continuous reviewing, improving of new experiences, and a systematic check-up that will prevent the old and bad practices from getting the upper hand again.

Concentration work does not mean only directing our energies in certain strategic places, but also *concentrating* in all the phases of work that are part and parcel of the main problem before us—*building the Party into a mass proletarian Party.*

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# The Tasks of Our Party in the Work Among the Farmers

*(Speech of Comrade H. Puro at the Extraordinary Conference of the Communist Party, July 7-10, 1933.)*

WHILE the main task of this Party Conference is to orientate the Party towards the basic heavy industries and towards the basic sections of the proletariat, along the line of the Open Letter and Comrade Browder's report, in conjunction with this task we have also the task of making political inroads of the Party among the farmers. In my report I shall deal mainly with two points which the Party must keep in mind in working among the farmers:

1. To clarify the aim of the work among the farmers.
2. To know the task of the Party and how to accomplish it.

Now a few words regarding the general purpose of our work among the rural population. I think, comrades, we must understand that this is not a separate task apart from the main task of the Party, but that it is directly connected with our fundamental aim: the proletarian revolution, the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship. The revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist system cannot be done by the vanguard alone. Therefore it is necessary that this vanguard win over the decisive majority of the working class. The working class alone cannot accomplish this task; it needs allies—and our main allies in this struggle are, as the agrarian resolution very correctly points out, the toiling farmers, the poor, small, and a considerable section of the ruined middle, farmers. Therefore, we must approach our work among the farmers from the point of view of winning over this important section of the population as the definite allies of the revolutionary proletariat.

## THE POSSIBILITY OF WINNING THE TOILING RURAL MASSES

Now let us for the moment examine what possibilities we have in the present situation for accomplishing this task. Comrade Stalin points out that this task can be accomplished only by giving unhesitant support to the impoverished farmers in their struggles for their everyday demands. In the United States we have a population of 32,000,000 living on the farms, and another 30,000,000 living in towns of less than ten thousand population. Therefore, actually 62,000,000 live in the countryside. Of this population

the majority are poor, small, and middle farmers—that is, toilers. There is, therefore, every possibility of winning these toiling masses to the side of the revolutionary workers.

#### AGRICULTURAL WORKERS READY FOR STRUGGLE

Recently compiled figures on wage workers show that we have nearly four million agricultural laborers in the United States—more than in any other single industry.

The situation of the agricultural laborers is such at the present time that there is a tremendous unemployment which is constantly increasing due to the flux of unemployed city workers to the countryside and due to the ruination of a large number of farmers. This situation, of course, worsens the position of those agricultural laborers who are still employed. Most of them are working for their board or are getting 25, 30 or 50 cents a day, and the hours are unlimited. It is no wonder that spontaneous struggles among the agricultural workers have sprung up on many big farms on the West Coast.

Since the Party has begun some systematic work among them, these workers have been ready for organization and struggles. Watch the issues of the *Western Worker* for the last couple of months, and you will see it is full of reports of agricultural workers' strikes. Many of these strikes have been won. And not only are there struggles of the agricultural workers in California and Colorado, but these struggles are spreading to Western and Southwestern states like New Mexico, etc. Yet we must realize there are quite a number of weaknesses here in our work. We have not given sufficient attention to the work among this most important section of the rural population.

#### IMPORTANCE OF WORK AMONG SHARECROPPERS

Secondly, comrades, the sharecroppers in the South are the poorest section of the farmers. They are very close to the proletariat, although the fact remains that they have a peasant ideology because of their economic position. They are not working directly for wages, but, nevertheless, there is a great revolutionary possibility among this section of the rural population. Not only is their economic exploitation unlimited, but they have been oppressed for decades by their capitalist landlords.

Their condition is practically no better than that of serfs. Now, comrades, our Party in the last period has begun to do systematic work among these Negro sharecroppers. We must do much more, however. We must help the local comrades, we must develop more comrades of an efficient type, such as those who have gone

out and with steady, patient, persistent work have out of nothing built up an organization of three thousand—a well-working sharecroppers' organization. This is only the very beginning, which has given us very good experiences and much material that will help us to develop new cadres among the sharecroppers, which in turn will aid us to spread out the organization work in this section.

We must realize that the organization and work among the Southern sharecroppers, especially in the Black Belt, are one of the key questions in the Negro liberation struggle. Our Party has not yet placed this question in such a manner, or given it such importance, as it really deserves.

#### SITUATION OF TOILING FARMERS

In reference to the situation among the exploited farmers generally (I cannot go into detail on this question), I refer you to my report in the Polburo meeting on May 15th which has been made available to all leading comrades, and also to my article in the June issue of *The Communist*. I will merely indicate some figures which illustrate what the end of capitalist stabilization has brought about. The figures show that the farmers' income since 1919 has dropped from \$16,000,000,000 to \$5,000,000,000—more than two-thirds. I think this figure alone will illustrate the position of the toiling farmers. The outrageous robbery by finance capital and its agents, the marketing companies, the railroads, etc., has resulted in the circumstance that during the period of 1925-30, 34 percent of all farmers have been sold out in forced sales. During the last two-and-a-half-year period this percentage has grown much bigger, because these forced sales have increased so much. At the same time tenantry has grown from 38 percent since 1925 to 42 percent in 1932. In many states large sections of the farmers—almost entire counties—have lost their former independent position and have become tenants. And our resolution correctly describes this situation, stating that many even of those farmers who have not yet lost their farms, have become so dependent that they are merely housekeepers of the finance capitalists and their agents. Marx's description of the situation of the French peasantry in the middle of the 19th century, after the bourgeois revolution, applies to American conditions at the present stage. Marx said then that landownership had become merely the warrant for forced sales. I think this is true in regard to the present situation of the majority of the exploited farmers in the United States. Comrade Stalin says that "in virtue of the special conditions of the situation, the peasantry has certain revolutionary possibilities." I think we can agree with this view in respect to the United States, where these revolutionary

possibilities are approaching. By our everyday work among the farmers, by giving leadership to their struggles, by influencing their political views, we can make excellent use of these possibilities towards winning them closer and closer to the struggles of the proletariat and towards the revolutionary aims of the proletariat.

#### RELATION OF COMMUNIST PARTY TOWARDS FARMERS' STRUGGLES

Our Party has correctly estimated these possibilities in the main.

Less than a year ago the Iowa farm strike broke out, after numerous spontaneous struggles here and there among the farmers. After the first struggles led by the United Farmers League and the Communist Party in the Northwest, the Party saw immediately that the Iowa struggle was not merely a spontaneous, local passing incident among the farmers, but recognized that it represented the first determined efforts among the farmers not to bear their burden any longer without struggle. Our Party gave unhesitant support to the farmers in Iowa, pointing out at the same time that it is not sufficient to limit the struggle within the markets and within the price question only, but that the farmers must broaden out their struggle, that they must be prepared to struggle against forced sales, sheriff sales, against the taxation burden, for immediate relief, etc. And our Party did not limit itself only to this political advice, but took steps to give organizational leadership and a program for the coming struggles. This was done in the form of initiating the calling and the organizing of the Washington Farmers' National Relief Conference.

Our Party has already in the discussions of the Polburo and in the Sixteenth Plenum estimated that this decision to hold the Washington Conference was correct and that this conference became the rallying point of the moods of militant struggles of the toiling farmers throughout the country. The militant program of the Washington Conference became the effective medium for mobilization of struggles which spread throughout the country.

And, comrades, I think this can be said: That while in many strikes in which we have had leadership of the workers we have not been able to consolidate our influence among the workers organizationally, in our work among the farmers we have steadily made gains and consolidated these gains into organizational forms.

#### SIGNIFICANCE OF FARMERS' MOVEMENT

Comrades, what do these farmers' struggles signify for us, and what lessons must we draw from them? I do not think it is the farmers' own realization alone, but also the example that the proletariat has been able to give and even that little contact of the city

proletariat with the farmers which has been achieved, which have inspired the farmers to follow the example of the workers. Lenin, writing on the task of the Party in relation to winning over the peasants, as early as 1903 and 1905, pointed out that the peasants were coming to the cities and learning about the workers' struggle which, however, they did not yet fully understand. But he said that these workers' struggles had certainly made an impression among these peasants. It is evident, also, that the American farmers, because of their special conditions, are much closer to city life, through good roads, automobiles, through closer inter-connection with the city workers, etc.

Our unemployed marches, our relief struggles among the unemployed, and the strike struggles have had a very great influence upon the farmers to strike themselves, to utilize the strike as an effective mass weapon in struggle. What lesson must we draw from this? The lesson is that only the proletariat, which is able to wage great strike struggles against capital, is able to draw these allies, these other sections of the population which are close to the workers, to its leadership, to follow its example. This again emphasizes the correctness of the line of the Open Letter, which puts forth as the main task of our Party the winning over of the majority of the proletariat in the basic industries.

#### FARMERS' MILITANCY MUST BE DEVELOPED TOWARDS REVOLUTIONARY CONSCIOUSNESS

The militancy of the farmers' struggle also shows the determination among them to wage their fight against the robbery of finance capital and its agents. We have seen very sharp struggles during the past months, especially in Iowa and in the last Wisconsin strike, where fifteen thousand farmers were waging a struggle not only against the milk trusts but against the entire forces of capital, not only its moral, political, and economic forces, but also against its armed forces. In the Wisconsin strike martial law was declared and tear gas bombs and airplanes were used against the farmers. The same thing in Iowa. The degree of militancy of these farmers is illustrated by the story that these farmers, who did not know much about the Communist Party, came to our comrades and said, "What will you do to help us when martial law is declared? Can you help us with rifles or machine guns?" They were determined to drive these National Guardsmen from their land. Of course, the comrades told them that the time has not yet come and that first we must do something else. I think the degree of militancy of these farmers shows the revolutionary possibilities that Comrade Stalin spoke of. We must not misunderstand it and think that these

farmers' struggles have already revolutionary aims. They are not yet class-conscious, not yet revolutionary; they are potentially so. This militancy can be given class-consciousness and a revolutionary aim only by the revolutionary proletariat and by our Party. This, comrades, is the task before us.

According to figures compiled about two weeks ago, we may say that we have organized about 50,000 farmers in 34 states.

#### UNITY WITH WORKERS

At the Washington Conference solidarity with the workers was expressed by all delegates. Later this solidarity was practiced in the course of struggles of the workers and the farmers. In the farmers' strikes, especially in Iowa last year, and in the Wisconsin farmers' strike, unemployed workers assisted farmers in picketing and in fighting for their demands. On the other hand, farmers have been participating in many struggles, together with the unemployed and striking workers.

In Eastern Pennsylvania we have made systematic progress in this work. Farmers have distributed free milk to unemployed families. In the preparation of the Philadelphia milk strike systematic organizational measures have been taken in order to prepare for joint action against the exploiters. This unity between the workers and the farmers has been developed to quite an extent, but it has to be developed much more.

#### WEAKNESSES AND SHORTCOMINGS

We have made many mistakes. Of course, if we would not have done anything we would not have made any mistakes. However, it is necessary to take a self-critical, political attitude towards these mistakes so that in the future we will be able to avoid them.

I will begin with the Washington Conference. In the course of the Iowa strikes we had reminiscences of that attitude towards the farmers which was expressed in the first editorial in *The Producers' News*, which declared that the farmers' strike for higher prices cannot be supported because it means higher prices for workers. This was corrected by the Central Committee and the correct attitude for the entire Party was developed regarding the farmers' strike. There was also hesitation in the calling of the Farmers' Conference, and there were even some leading comrades who opposed the conference. This attitude was condemned by the Central Committee. In the conference itself several mistakes were made, although as a whole it was successful. The biggest mistake was that while the conference was politically initiated, inspired and organized by our Party, the Party was not put forward. Con-

sequently many of the farmers did not know what role the Communist Party was playing in organizing this conference and organizing the program of action. These farmers did not know that the Communist Party was actively leading this conference and assisting in working out the program for their struggles. This failure of putting the Party forth is criticized very sharply in the resolution of the Party Conference. At least some of our Party comrades should have spoken in the name of the Party at the conference.

While the program of the conference is considered a very practical militant program, there are several points that must be criticized here. For instance, on the question of the price-fixing paragraph, it is pointed out in the resolution that such a paragraph had no place in the program. Such control of price-fixing under the capitalist system, even if it would be achieved, would not benefit the toiling farmers.

The resolution also points out that while it was correct to present the petition of the farmers' demands to Congress and to the government officials, there was not sufficient emphasis on the mass action of the farmers accompanying the petition.

Another shortcoming of the program is that it did not take up the special demands of the poorest sections of the farmers, namely the Negro sharecroppers. This was not done, although there was a Negro delegation from Alabama and Florida and these Negro delegates were warmly received by all the delegates.

These mistakes at the conference laid the basis for further mistakes that were made later. If the Polburo immediately after the conference, in examining the work of the conference had corrected these mistakes, other mistakes of similar nature would have been avoided. These mistakes made at the conference are definitely of a right opportunist character. Later, mistakes of a similar nature have been made.

#### HESITANCY IN BUILDING PARTY

There has been considerable hesitancy and some resistance in building the Party, as for instance, in Eastern Pennsylvania, one of the most strategic centers of our mass work among the farmers. There, by systematic and consistent work, we have drawn over a thousand organized farmers very close to the leadership of the Party. The farmers with few exceptions didn't know that the Party was actually leading these organizations and their struggles. There has been systematic resistance to building of the Party up until now, and the leading people in these organizations have not been drawn into the Party, although they have been very close to the Party and even willing to accept its leadership.

There has even been a theory developed that a Party unit or a Party fraction cannot meet in the countryside, either openly or secretly. This theory must be rejected, because it means denying that Party units must be able to meet in all kinds of conditions—in conditions of terror, of illegality, etc. This would mean liquidating the Party, this would mean placing such obstacles that it would be impossible to build the Party. There has been some hesitancy and delay in building the Party in Nebraska also. There we have organized the biggest single state organization of the farmers, consisting of about 25,000 members, into the Nebraska Holiday Association. There we made our principal program for this Holiday Association, "No dues payments and non-payment of salaries for officials," etc. While it would have been entirely correct to agitate against high dues payments collected by the old-time farm organizations, against high salaries of the officials, the theory of no dues payments and non-payment of salaries to organizers cannot be put as a political program and in my opinion even from the organizational point of view it is a wrong theory. It creates a decentralization idea, a no-leadership idea, etc.

Where have these theories and mistakes led us? They led us to a danger of allowing the entire organization to slip from under our influence. Because we put forth this non-political program and on the basis of this program mobilized these farmers under our leadership, when the first sharp attack came in the form of arresting its most militant organizers and members, the officials of this organization ran under cover and did nothing to defend these militant organizers. Demoralization developed in the entire work of the Nebraska organization. Of course, we realized our mistakes, our shortcomings in this work, and the best forces were sent in for a period of two months to organize the conference, to organize militant defence, to bring forth the most militant elements and thereby create new leadership and also to revise the program and place it on a higher political level.

#### OPPORTUNISTIC TENDENCIES

We have also been too careless not only with the examination of the Washington Conference program but in giving critical analysis to the programs of the various farmers' organizations. We have in these programs liberal phrases tending toward an opportunist line. We must be more critical in examining these programs and demands of the various farmers' organizations and lead and guide them in formulating these programs on the correct line. There have been some other mistakes in the content of our papers. I already mentioned the editorial in the *Producers' News* during the

Iowa strike. In the new paper that was established by the Washington Conference, there have appeared some mistakes towards a right opportunist line. Just when there was an all-around "red scare" attack by the capitalist papers and by the farm misleaders against us, these crass mistakes were made in the Washington paper—like the editorials compromising with Townley, misrepresenting the Pitchers Bill and welcoming Milo Reno's paper. There must be the sharpest attacks and exposure of scoundrels like Townley and Milo Reno. These mistakes, of course, have been explained and were immediately corrected.

There is also a tendency in our farm work which is a right opportunist tendency but covered with left phrases and that is ignoring the work among the farmers. This attitude, of course, is harmful because it would leave these great masses of the farmers entirely under bourgeois, social-fascist and reformist leadership—which would mean that the farmers would be utilized against the revolutionary proletariat. Comrade Stalin says the following regarding this attitude:

"Really, there is no trace of Marxism in such an attitude. For the proletarian revolution, indifference to so important a problem as the peasant question is tantamount to the repudiation of the dictatorship of the proletariat and is an open betrayal of Marxism."

I think this quotation of Comrade Stalin shows the incorrect content of this attitude very clearly, and that it has nothing to do with a Marxist-Leninist attitude toward the peasant question. It is absolutely necessary that this sort of attitude be sharply condemned.

#### ROOSEVELT'S "NEW DEAL" MUST BE EXPOSED

I think our most immediate and urgent task at the present moment is to expose the Roosevelt Farm Bill, which is the "New Deal" program for the farmers. The Roosevelt Farm Bill is intended to do the same thing among the farmers as the Industrial Recovery Act among the workers. And as this Industrial Recovery Act has been correctly characterized as an Industrial Slavery Act, this Roosevelt Farm Bill has the same meaning for the large majority of the exploited farmers.

The Farm Bill has three sections: first, the price-fixing scheme; second, the re-financing scheme, third, inflation measures. Mr. Wilson, who is the Chief Administrator of the Wheat Section of this Agricultural Adjustment Act, explained this Farm Bill in the *New York Times*, and while he admits that during the year 1931-1932 the consumption of wheat was 175,000,000 bushels less than

normal—which is due to world-wide unemployment (although Mr. Wilson does not say this)—he proposes not to distribute the surplus wheat to the unemployed or the needy farmers, but to reduce by 20 percent the wheat production acreage for about a three-year period. And, secondly, he proposes to institute a processing tax of 30 cents per bushel and by this method collect from the worker and farmer consumers \$130,000,000 to \$150,000,000 in the form of a sales tax. He does not give an estimate of the expense of administering this Bill, which will be very big, because this Bill needs a very big bureaucratic apparatus for its operation. What is left of the administration expenses will be distributed to those farmers who sign contracts with the government to reduce the acreage by 20 percent. This law goes into effect July 9th.

Another feature in the allotment section is to tie the farmers to the government apparatus by making them spy on each other. Mr. Wilson explains this in his article. The following is a quotation from his article:

“The fact that the farmers usually know what their neighbors are doing is expected to be a powerful influence in making the plan work fairly in the individual grounds.”

This means that the farmers themselves have to inform the county agents and the government inspectors if their neighbors are adhering to this plan or not. And these farmers under this Farm Bill really become part of the government apparatus.

This declaration of Mr. Wilson's means that the county agents, the most hated by the farmers as tools of the government, are to become the chief administrators of the Farm Bill; they have the task to organize the farmers in each community to reduce their acreage, and in addition there will be special federal inspectors to do spy work among the farmers.

The inflation section of the bill, among other things, proposes to promote an improvement of the farmers' situation by artificially raising prices and is supposed to give the farmers a “better chance to pay their debts.”

The refinancing measures have the following features: to release the bankers, insurance companies and the rich farmers from worries about how to collect their mortgages or debts from poor farmers. The government will take over these debts through its own credit facilities and refinance those farmers who have “sound security” to offer. Morgenthau, one of Roosevelt's “brain trust”, is using this scheme as a slick way to open closed banks.

How does this section of the Farm Bill work out? A couple of weeks ago I met a farmer who is sympathetic to us, who is con-

siderably well-to-do—that is, he is not a poor farmer—and he explained how this section of the government bill works. From all those farmers who secure loans from the Federal Loan Banks, a government agent picks out certain well-to-do farmers who will constitute the district board of this government Land Bank; they are responsible for the entire district that these loans and the interest will be paid. And now again when the refinancing of these mortgages comes up, these farmers are called together. And it has been discovered that only those who are at least moderately well-to-do and can offer sound security can finance their mortgages, but the poor farmers whose mortgages are high and whose land values have dropped down, whose production capacity and paying capacity have gone down, have no hopes of refinancing their mortgages.

I think it is correct to say that this Farm Bill means the same thing to the toiling farmers as the Industrial Recovery Act means to the workers, and we have to expose this completely. In the course of the exposure of this bill we must also expose the capitalist government as an agent of finance capital, as an agent for the big trusts and marketing companies and in favor of the rich farmers.

#### SHIFTING THE BURDEN OF THE CRISIS UPON THE TOILERS

Politically in broad terms we can summarize the program as follows: The program will further impoverish the poor and middle farmers and enrich the big farmers and finance capital. It will pull down the standard of living of the farm and city workers. It is an attempt to split the toiling farmers from the workers.

The bourgeoisie at present is very jubilant that the price of wheat has gone up to \$1 again, and they have cause to be jubilant, because these wheat stocks are not in the hands of the farmers any more, but instead, 350,000,000 bushels of wheat, which is three times larger than the normal carry-over, are in the hands of the speculators. And certainly those speculators who have bought this wheat for 25 to 30 cents a bushel from the farmers have cause to be jubilant over getting these big profits.

Mr. Green and other labor fakery are giving their direct support to this Farm Bill as they are giving their support to the Industrial Recovery Act. We must get further unity between the worker-consumer and the farmer. The price of a loaf of bread has already gone up from five to ten cents a loaf, while the size of the loaf has been reduced. Mr. Wilson tries to explain demagogically that the consuming public doesn't mind paying a half cent more for a loaf of bread, because they know this will raise the buying power of the farmers.

It is clear that the Farm Bill as well as the Industrial Recovery Act has the objective of getting out of the crisis at the expense of the toiling masses. And here we must organize both workers and farmers together against both bills. For instance, the farmers can be made to assist the workers to fight against the Industrial Recovery Act by explaining it is to their own interests to do so, because the Industrial Recovery Act means cutting down the wages and worsening the conditions of the workers, that is, cutting down their buying and consuming power. This will mean a smaller market and lower prices for the farmers' goods.

#### WHAT MUST OUR PROGRAM BE?

Against this Roosevelt Farm Bill we must place more definite emphasis on the cancellation of the debts of the poor, small and middle farmers. We have partially launched this slogan already. We must more fully explain the real meaning of the Roosevelt Farm Bill, that it doesn't benefit the position of the toiling section of the farmers, but means further enslavement and more ruthless foreclosures of their homes and farms. In this way we are laying the basis for the slogan of cancelling the debts of the toiling farmers, and although we have been somewhat hesitant, they will be ready to rally around this slogan which can become a means of politicizing and revolutionizing our struggles.

While this is one of the most immediate and urgent tasks of the Party, we must also take other measures—we should further complete the Party action program for the farmers. Before the next Party conference we must complete this action program, at the same time gathering further material for the complete agrarian program of the Party.

#### BUILDING OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

On the other hand, in order to strengthen our work, in order to guarantee real leadership for the Communist Party of the majority of the toiling farmers, we must begin systematically building the Party in the villages and farming communities, especially drawing in the agricultural workers and the poor, small farmers and sharecroppers. We find that they are ready to join the Party as soon as its meaning, its program, are explained to them. Party units in the villages and Party fractions in the farm organizations must be given systematic guidance by the district and section committees. And when I speak of Party building in the villages and farm communities, I do not mean only building the Party among the farmers, but also in many smaller industrial towns and drawing the farmers into these units and thereby making close contact between the in-

dustrial workers and toiling farmers and providing proletarian leadership for the farmers' struggles.

The everyday work of the Party among the farmers and in the villages must, of course, be planned and has to be in line with our main resolution—that is, with the Open Letter to the Party—in order to render active support for broadening and strengthening the proletarian base of the Party. The application of this line requires also taking up energetically the organization of the agricultural workers. I do not mean that the Party should give an order to the T.U.U.L. in this work. I think we must realize that the main task of the T.U.U.L. is now to build red trade unions in the basic industries, and therefore in regard to the agricultural workers the Party with its apparatus, and its forces in the field of farm work, rather than the T.U.U.L., must take chief responsibility in this respect.

We must also give more assistance and emphasis on the organization of the sharecroppers and poor strata of the farmers in the South. While making every effort to win a considerable section of the ruined middle farmers we must also sharpen our struggle against the big farmers.

The fight against social-fascism and fascist tendencies in the villages must be waged in a way to broaden the Party influence in the conservative farm organizations and to sharpen the fight against the misleadership of the social-fascists, of the Milo Reno, Simpson, etc., type, also against the Farmer-Labor Party leaders, against the misleadership of the Socialist Party and against the A. F. of L. bureaucracy.

On the question of the war danger, while we have already taken this question up in various conferences of the farmers, in the state conferences, adopting resolutions, etc., in our everyday work among the farmers' organizations we must systematize this work by drawing in women and youth forces into the agrarian movement and developing them as militant fighters against war.

In this connection we must also take up the question of popularizing the Soviet Union, especially popularizing the speech of Comrade Stalin to the collective farm shock brigades,\* thereby bringing out the revolutionary change in the system, as the only way out of the crisis for the workers and the toiling farmers.

In the theoretical sphere of the work, which has been very weak, we must make available the writings of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin for our Party cadres and our agrarian cadres especially. (*Applause.*)

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J. Stalin: *Speech to the Collective Farm Shock-Brigade Workers*. Workers Library Publishers, 5c.

# The Struggle for the Leninist Position on the Negro Question in the U.S.A.

By HARRY HAYWOOD

THE present program of our Party on the Negro question was first formulated at the Sixth Congress of the Communist International, in 1928. On the basis of the most exhaustive consideration of all the peculiarities, historical development, economic, living and cultural conditions of the Negro people in the United States as well as the experience of the Party in its work among Negroes, that Congress definitely established the problem of the Negroes as that of an *oppressed nation* among whom there existed all the requisites for a national revolutionary movement against American imperialism.

This estimation was a concrete application of the Marxist-Leninist conception of the national question to the conditions of the Negroes and was predicated upon the following premises: first, the concentration of large masses of Negroes in the agricultural regions of the Black Belt, where they constitute a majority of the population; secondly, the existence of powerful relics of the former chattel slave system in the exploitation of the Negro toilers—the plantation system based on sharecropping, landlord supervision of crops, debt slavery, etc.; thirdly, the development, on the basis of these slave remnants, of a political superstructure of inequality expressed in all forms of social proscription and segregation; denial of civil rights, right to franchise, to hold public offices, to sit on juries, as well as in the laws and customs of the South. This vicious system is supported by all forms of arbitrary violence, the most vicious being the peculiar American institution of lynching. All of this finds its theoretical justification in the imperialist ruling class theory of the “natural” inferiority of the Negro people.

This whole vicious system of oppression, while being most sharply felt by the Negro masses in the South also affects their social status in the rest of the country. The Negro poor farmers and farm laborers fleeing from the misery and starvation of the Southern plantations to the industrial centers of the North, do not thereby obtain freedom. On the contrary, at their heels follows also the heritage of plantation slavery resulting in lower wages, worse liv-

ing conditions, discrimination in social life even in the "liberal" North.

Thus the agrarian revolution, *i. e.* the struggle of the poverty-stricken and land-starved Negro sharecroppers and poor farmers on the Black Belt and in the South for the land, for the destruction of all vestiges of slave bondage—this, together with the general struggle for democratic rights of the Negro people all over the country, as well as for their rights to independent national existence on the Black Belt, constitute the chief axis of the Negro national liberation movement in the U.S.A.

The enslavement of the Negro masses in the United States is an important prop of American imperialism. American imperialism is fundamentally interested in the preservation of the slave remnants in Southern agriculture and the national oppression of the Negro people as a condition for the extraction of super profits. It is the force that stands behind the Southern white ruling classes (capitalists and landlords) in their direct and violent plunder of the Negro masses in the Black Belt. Therefore, the liberation struggles of the Negro masses are directed against the very foundation of the capitalist-imperialist social structure in the United States.

In the present epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolution the Negro question in the United States must be conceived as part of the national colonial problem, or, in other words, it is part of the general world-wide problem of freedom of the oppressed and dependent peoples from the shackles of imperialism.

The Leninist conception of the national question in the present historical epoch was formulated with remarkable clarity by Comrade Stalin in his book *The Foundations of Leninism*:

"It (the national question) is now seen to be the world-wide problem of the deliverance of the inhabitants of the colonial and dependent countries from the yoke of imperialism. . . . The imperialist war and the Russian Revolution have confirmed the Leninist view that the national problem can only be solved in the arena of the proletarian revolution, and when it is linked up with that revolution; that *for the revolution of the western world the path of victory lies by way of revolutionary alliance with the struggle of colonial and dependent nationalities to throw off the yoke of imperialism.* The national question is part of the general question of the proletarian revolution, part of the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat."

This Leninist treatment of the national question applies with full force to the Negro problem in the United States.

This question, which prior to and during the Civil War and Reconstruction was a part of the bourgeois revolution, now becomes a part of the proletarian revolution. The proletarian revolution must

solve in passing the uncompleted task of the bourgeois democratic and agrarian revolution in the South, left over by the Civil War.

"A radical transformation of the agrarian structure of the Southern states is one of basic tasks of the revolution. . . . Only the victorious proletarian revolution will completely and finally solve the agrarian and national questions of the Southern United States in the interest of the overwhelming majority of the Negro population in the country." (Thesis of the Sixth Congress of the C. I. on the Revolutionary Movement in the Colonies).

The Negro masses, once the allies of the Northern bourgeoisie (during the Civil War and Reconstruction), have now become the allies of the proletariat. In their struggle for national liberation these masses constitute an important part of the army of the revolutionary proletariat in the struggle for the overthrow of American capitalism. Hence, the victory of the proletarian revolution in the United States and the struggle of the Negro masses for national liberation demand the consummation of a united fighting front of the white toilers and the Negro people against the common enemy,—American imperialism. Such a united front can only be effective on the basis of direct and effective support by the white working class (as the working class of the oppressor nation) to the efforts of the Negro masses to free themselves from the imperialist yoke. In this connection it is important to keep in mind the dictum of Karl Marx to the English working class on the Irish question: "A people which oppresses another people cannot itself be free".

From this Marxist-Leninist formulation of the Negro question proceeds the line of the Party. While fighting against all forms of inequality of the Negro people, for the abolition of all forms of slave exploitation and oppression and for complete social equality, the Party was urged by the Sixth Congress of the Communist International to come forward openly and unreservedly for the rights of Negroes in the Black Belt to national self-determination. The mobilization of the masses of toilers for this struggle was to go hand in hand with a pitiless fight against all forms of white chauvinism (the ideology of the imperialist oppressor) as the main danger, while at the same time all hangovers of petty bourgeois nationalist distrust among the Negro toilers were to be patiently combatted.

Only on this basis could there be welded a close, unbreakable unity between the Negro and white toilers in their struggle against the common enemy. Only in this way could our Party fulfil its international proletarian obligations. Such were the directives of the Sixth Congress on the Negro question in the U. S. A.

This treatment of the Negro question as a question of an op-

pressed nation was, however, by no means new. Lenin, in his writings on this question had already laid the theoretical ground work for our Negro program.

As early as 1913, in his brochure *The Development of Capitalism in American Agriculture*, Lenin, in defending the Marxist position on the agrarian question against the theorists of the Narodniki (Populists) and Social Revolutionaries, laid bare the agrarian essence of the Negro question, indicating its national revolutionary character. In reply to the petty-bourgeois economist, Himmer, who contended that the "United States was a country which never knew feudalism and is foreign to its economic survivals", Lenin wrote: "This statement is in direct opposition to the truth, for the survivals of slavery differ in no way from the survivals of feudalism and the survivals of slavery are very strongly felt up to the present time in the former slave-owning South".

In the same pamphlet Lenin compared the position of the Negroes in the South with that of the serfs in Czarist Russia, stating that the "similarity of the economic position of the Negroes with that of the former serfs in the agrarian centers of Russia is remarkable. . . . The South", Lenin continued, "is a hemmed-in prison with the absence of fresh air for the 'liberated' Negroes".

It was on the basis of this analysis that the Second Congress of the Communist International placed the Negro question in the U.S.A. as the problem of an oppressed nation. In the thesis of this Congress on the national and colonial question which was developed under the direct guidance of Lenin, the Communist Parties were committed to "support the revolutionary movement *among subject nations* (for example, Ireland, American Negroes and in the colonies)". [Emphasis mine—H. H.]

The revolutionary program of the Party on the Negro question has been tested and confirmed in the development of the class struggle in the U.S.A. and in some substantial political gains for the Party in the leadership of the Negro masses.

Although the Party from its very inception raised the slogan of struggle for Negro rights, its activities in this field did not result in any real successes in the leadership of mass struggle among Negroes. Obviously, this was in the main due to our theoretical unclarity, our lack of a real Leninist approach to the Negro question as a question of an oppressed nation. Consequently the work of the Party during this period was fraught with many errors and weaknesses. Without waging an uncompromising fight for the emancipation of the Negroes as a nation, for their right to national self-determination in the Black Belt, without bringing forward the historical connection between this struggle and that of the white working class, it was im-

possible to conduct a consistent fight against the poisonous influences of white chauvinism in the ranks of the white working class and to overcome distrust among the Negro toilers. Without the recognition of this right, it was impossible to weld the iron unity of the working class, to develop its hegemony and the leadership of the Party in the liberation struggles of the Negro toilers.

It was this lack of Leninist clarity on the question of self-determination that prevented the Party from exerting any appreciable influence upon the first great movement of Negro masses since the Civil War and Reconstruction period. This potentially revolutionary movement of the Negro toilers, which arose in the post-war period, was allowed to fall under the influence of reactionary petty-bourgeois utopians led by Garvey and thereby diverted from a struggle against American imperialism into channels of a "peaceful return to Africa".

These dangerous weaknesses in our work among Negroes could only be overcome on the basis of the development of a real Bolshevik Leninist program, the kernel of which is the conception of the Negro question as that of an oppressed nation, as part of the question of the proletarian revolution. Only on this basis could the Party effect a decisive change in its Negro work and come forward as the real leader in the struggle of the Negro masses against imperialism. This program was a great contribution to the class struggle of the American working class, giving it a powerful weapon with which to break through the barriers of bourgeois race and national hatred, to tap the tremendous reserve force of the proletariat, the struggle of the Negro masses against imperialist oppression, and to unite the Negro and white toilers in a common struggle against capitalism.

The first real achievements of our Party in the leadership of the struggles of the Negro masses date from the beginnings of the application of this Leninist line. A historic landmark in the development of our Negro work was the public trial of August Yokinen. In this trial the case of discrimination by a white Party member against Negroes was made the occasion for a political demonstration in which the Party's program on the Negro question and the struggle against white chauvinism were dramatized with an unprecedented effect before the widest masses throughout the country. Comrade Browder in his report before American students, in estimating the political significance of this trial, declared "that it was a public challenge dramatically flung into the face of one of the basic principles of social relationships in America—the American institution of Jim-Crowism. . . . The expulsion of Yokinen, expressing our declaration of war against white chauvinism, exerted a tremendous influence to draw the Negro masses closer to us."

In this trial the Party achieved a great step forward in the educa-

tion of its membership and the masses around the Party on our program on the Negro question. This was particularly exemplified in Comrade Yokinen himself who, after six months, came back into the Party as one of the staunchest fighters for its program of Negro liberation and who, as a result of his courageous and militant stand on this question, was deported by the Negro-hating imperialist government. The trial of Yokinen served to prepare the Party ideologically for a real interest in the struggle for Negro rights.

The Yokinen trial was immediately followed by the organization of a mass movement to save the lives of the Scottsboro boys. On the basis of the political preparation through the Yokinen trial the Party was able to seize effectively upon the issue of the frame-up of these boys to develop a tremendous campaign of mass action and the exposure of the whole system of national oppression of the Negroes. The Scottsboro campaign marked the first real nationwide mobilization of masses by the Party for a concrete struggle against one of the cornerstones of capitalist Negro oppression—the institution of lynching. Through the struggle on this issue the Party was able to bring its program before the widest masses of Negro and white toilers, arousing among them the greatest sympathy and confidence. Scottsboro, as the first big battle conducted by the Party on the front of Negro national liberation, did much to break down the traditional barriers of chauvinism and national distrust separating the Negro and white toilers. This struggle, which was coupled with a real political exposure of the treacherous role of the Negro bourgeois reformists of the N.A.A.C.P., hastened the process of class differentiation among the Negroes—the separation of the interests of the Negro proletarian and semi-proletarian masses from the general interests of “race solidarity” as propagated by the Negro bourgeois nationalists. The Negro toilers began to understand class divisions. They began to find out who were their friends and who their enemies.

Only through the vigorous application of our correct Leninist program on the Negro question could the Party carry through and lead such a struggle as the Scottsboro campaign. This campaign gave rise to the sudden movement of mass participation of Negro workers on an unprecedented scale in the general struggles of the working class throughout the country. The great strike of the Pennsylvania, Ohio and West Virginia coal miners which broke out in 1931, during the first part of the Scottsboro campaign, witnessed greater participation of Negro workers than any other economic action led by the revolutionary trade unions. Large masses of Negro workers rallied to the unemployed movement, displaying matchless militancy in the actions of the unemployed. Notable examples of

this were the heroic demonstrations against evictions in the Negro neighborhoods of Chicago and Cleveland.

While the Negro masses were beginning to participate more and more in the class struggles in the North, an event of great historical significance occurred in the Black Belt—the organization of the Sharecroppers Union and the heroic resistance of the sharecroppers to the attacks of the landlords and sheriffs at Camp Hill, Alabama. In this struggle, the revolutionary ferment of the Negro poor farmers and sharecroppers received its first expression, resulting in the establishment of the first genuine revolutionary organization among the Negro poor farmers—the militant Sharecroppers Union. The agrarian movement of the Negro masses was further continued and developed in the Tallapoosa fight in which the sharecroppers gave armed resistance to the legalized robbery of the landlords and merchants.

This whole series of class and national liberation struggles was further deepened and politicalized through the Communist presidential election campaign of 1932. In this campaign the Party was able to further extend its program among the masses, rallying large numbers of Negroes behind its political slogans.

Thus the application of a Bolshevik program in conditions of sharpening crisis and growing radicalization of the Negroes has resulted in the extension of the political influence of the Party among broad masses of Negroes, and in the growth of the Party membership among them. Of outstanding importance in this period is the establishment of the Party in the South and in the Black Belt.

These struggles have led to a growing class consciousness of the Negro working class and its emergence upon the political arena as an independent class force in the Negro liberation movement. In the course of these struggles the Negro working class is rapidly liberating itself from the treacherous reformist influences. Thus the characteristic of the present stage of the development of the Negro movement is the maturing of this most important driving force of Negro liberation—the Negro industrial working class. The Negro workers, in close organic unity with the white working class and under the leadership of the Communist Party is the only force capable of rallying the masses of Negro toilers in a victorious struggle against capitalism. The struggle for Negro liberation is now taking place under conditions of growing proletarian hegemony and Communist Party leadership.

The Negro question at the present time assumes greater significance than at any time since the Civil War and Reconstruction period. The present period marks for the first time the participation of masses of Negroes in the political life of the country as a force

independent of the major capitalist parties. The significance of the Negro question as a factor in the sharpening of the revolutionary crisis of American imperialism has been thereby greatly increased.

The Leninist line on the Negro question was hammered out in the sharpest struggle against the opportunist line developed under the leadership of Lovestone. In the period prior to the Sixth Congress of the C.I. the work of the Party was characterized by weakness and hesitancy. This was due to the absence of a Leninist line on this question. These dangerous shortcomings of the Party in its work among Negroes were not at first so much expressed in open theoretical formulations, as they were expressed in practice characterized by neglect, passivity and indifference.

However, it remained for Lovestone to provide a theoretical foundation for all the opportunist views prevalent in the Party on the Negro question and to crystallize them into a definite right wing line in which all weaknesses were justified. This line was an integral part of the whole system of right wing views put forward in the Party by Lovestone, which found its fruition in the counter-revolutionary theory of American exceptionalism. This line was first clearly formulated in the report of Lovestone at the Fifth Convention of our Party (1927). In this report Lovestone stated the following:

"The migration of hundreds of thousands of Negroes from the South into the industrial centers of the North and East is rapidly changing the Negro masses from a reserve of capitalist reaction into a reserve of the proletarian revolution."

In other words, as long as the Negroes remained on the farms in the South they were reserves of capitalist reaction and could be considered reserves of the proletarian revolution only to the extent that they migrated into the industrial centers of the North. It is clear that this formulation justifies the complete desertion of the Negro toilers of the South. At the same time it rejects the role of the Negro peasantry as allies of the proletarian revolution and as an essential driving force, under the leadership of the Negro industrial working class, in the Negro liberation movement. This whole line was based upon a social-democratic denial of the national agrarian question among Negroes.

Not only did the Lovestoneites deny the possibility of revolutionary struggle on the part of the Negroes in the South, but they considered the very existence of the Negro agricultural masses as inimical to such struggles.

This counter-revolutionary conception was categorically rejected in the resolution of the Sixth Congress of the C.I. and in the resolu-

tion of the Executive Committee of the Communist International October 26, 1928.

"Thus the agrarian problem lies at the roots of the Negro national movement. The great majority of the Negroes in the rural districts of the South are *not 'reserves of capitalist reaction' but potential allies of the revolutionary proletariat*. Their objective position facilitates their transformation into a revolutionary force which under the leadership of the proletariat will be able to participate in the joint struggles with all other workers against capitalist exploitation." (Emphasis mine—H. H.)

The theory of the Negro masses in the South as "reserves of capitalist reaction" attained its further development in the Lovestone-Pepper theory of the Industrial Revolution in the South. The "Industrial Revolution in the South" was a cornerstone of the whole system of opportunist views which comprised the theory of American exceptionalism.

According to this theory American capitalism was to find a way out of its growing contradictions and escape the general crisis of world capitalism through the opening up of a whole new territory for capitalist expansion—the Southern states. This was to be done through the establishment of industries, and the mechanization of agriculture.

Thus the perspective was not one of the inevitable sharpening of the crisis in the U.S.A. but the opening up of a new era of unlimited prosperity for American capitalism, the ushering in of a "Hooverian Age" corresponding to the Victorian Age of British capitalism. Thus in America we were confronted not with decaying, moribund capitalism but progressive, robust capitalism. This counter-revolutionary movement of the theories of the bourgeois liberal apologists and enthusiasts, reflecting the awe of the petty bourgeoisie before the strength and "impregnability" of American imperialism.

On the Negro question this theory represented a continuation and further development of the theory of the Negro masses as a "reserve of capitalist reaction." The "industrial revolution" was to sweep away the remnants of slavery in Southern agriculture, proletarianize the Negro peasantry and thus automatically disentangle the complicated problem of national antagonism in the South. The Negro question as a special national question was to be solved within the confines of the capitalist imperialist structure without a struggle.

The whole opportunist theory of American exceptionalism was shattered in the Address of the Communist International to the C.P.U.S.A. (May, 1929), which reads in part:

"With a distinctness unprecedented in history, American capitalism is exhibiting now the effects of the inexorable laws of capitalist development, the laws of decline and downfall of capitalist society. The general crisis of capitalism is growing more rapidly than it may seem at first glance. The crisis will shake also the foundations of American imperialism."

In refuting Lovestone's views on the Negro question the C.I. Resolution of 1930 reads:

"...the prospect for the future is not an inevitable dying away of the national revolutionary Negro movement in the South, as Lovestone prophesied, but on the contrary a great advance of this movement and the rapid approach of the revolutionary crisis in the Black Belt."

Resistance to the C.I. program on the Negro question was further continued after the Sixth Congress in Pepper's slogan, "Negro Soviet Republics." This was an attempt on the part of Lovestone and Pepper to smuggle in the old opportunist line of denial of the Negro nationalist agrarian question under left phrases. In effect it amounted to making the acceptance of Soviets by the Negro masses in the Black Belt a condition for the Party's support of their struggle for the right of self-determination. This imposition of the slogan of Soviets from above on the Negro masses was equivalent to dictating to the Negro toilers the forms in which they must conduct their struggles against imperialism and consequently negated the whole principle of right of self-determination. Also the slogan of a "Soviet Republic" contained an opportunist attempt to skip over the present stage of preparation and organization of the Negro masses in the struggle for their immediate demands for the right of self-determination. This opportunist distortion of Pepper's was definitely rejected in the C. I. Resolution which states:

"Moreover, the Party cannot make its stand for this slogan dependent upon any conditions, even the condition that the proletariat has the hegemony in the national revolutionary Negro movement or that the majority of the Negro population in the Black Belt adopts the Soviet form (as Pepper demanded), etc."

The theory of the Negro masses in the South as "reserves of capitalist reaction," made its last open stand in the bourgeois liberal conception which regarded the Negro question not as a national question but as a race question. This conception gained ground among some Party comrades after the Sixth Congress and served to cloak their resistance to the line of the C. I. and the Party.

According to these comrades the Negro question arises solely from racial distinctions and their utilization by the bourgeoisie. In

this they failed to see the profound social antagonisms which lie at the base of the Negro problem, *i.e.*, the agrarian question and the struggle for democratic rights. Consequently the movement of the Negro toilers is reduced to a feeble bourgeois liberal opposition against race prejudice as divorced from its economic and social roots. It is clear that such a theory is nothing but a capitulation to bourgeois liberalism. This dangerous distortion of our line on the Negro question was categorically rejected by the C.I. and the Party. In this regard the Resolution of the C. I., October, 1930, while recognizing the role of the race factor in the oppression of the Negroes, definitely states:

"The Negro question in the United States must be viewed from the standpoint of its peculiarity, namely, as the question of an *oppressed nation*, which is in a peculiar and extraordinarily distressing situation of national oppression not only in view of the prominent *racial distinctions* (marked difference in the color of skin, etc.), but above all, because of considerable *social antagonism* (remnants of slavery)."

At the bottom of all these anti-Bolshevik theories on the Negro question lies a deep-rooted underestimation of the Negro liberation movement as a powerful force in the sharpening of the revolutionary crisis of American imperialism and consequently the non-understanding of this movement as an integral part of the proletarian revolution.

Only on the basis of the sharpest struggle against and the defeat of these anti-Leninist conceptions within its ranks has the Party been able to go forward in the winning of the Negro masses.

Although it can be said generally that our Party has rallied to the struggle against the worst manifestations of these errors that have been so harmful to our work in the past it must be said that survivals of these anti-Leninist ideas still persist, retarding the development of our work among Negroes. While the Party has become a real factor in the struggle for Negro rights and its political influence is rapidly increasing among ever larger sections of the Negro toilers, these successes are by no means commensurate with the objective possibilities and the rising upsurge of the masses. We are *still lagging behind the rapidly deepening ferment* among the Negro toilers. Our movement among Negroes still lacks a solid organizational base in the shops, factories and in the neighborhoods. This is noticeable first of all in the extremely high turn-over in the Negro membership of the Party, in the relatively small number of Negro workers in our revolutionary trade unions, and in the insufficient bringing forward of Negro cadres in all phases of Party work. There are still grave weaknesses in our struggle against and

exposure of the Negro bourgeois reformist leadership. These weaknesses were brought out in the united front on the Scottsboro campaign immediately following the Decatur verdict. In this united front there were manifested open opportunist tendencies in the direction of capitulation to the Negro reformists as well as right sectarian tendencies which would narrow down the united front. In the struggle against white chauvinism there is to be observed a widespread tendency to replace a consistent and daily struggle against this poisonous imperialist ideology linked up with the mobilization of the masses of white toilers in the struggle for the specific demands of the Negro masses by occasional spectacular anti-chauvinist demonstrations in the form of mass trials, which in most cases were badly prepared. In connection with the struggles for Negro rights there is noticeable an inability to connect up the popularization of our full program on the Negro question with the development of partial struggle for the daily needs of the Negro masses in the shops, factories, neighborhoods and on the plantations.

While the Party has carried through energetically general campaigns on national liberation issues as witnessed in the Scottsboro campaign and the Communist election struggles, nevertheless these general struggles have not been sufficiently utilized for the development of local struggles, for the mobilization of Negro toilers in the shops, factories and neighborhoods and on the plantations in the struggle for their most vital needs. Our weaknesses in the development of the struggles of the Negro toilers on the economic field are most glaringly manifested in the work of the revolutionary trade unions. The directives of the Fourteenth Plenum which call for making the Red unions the "real channels of Negro work" have not been sufficiently understood by the Party.

These shortcomings in our work among Negroes arise from two sources—first, they are connected with the general weakness of the Party as characterized in the Open Letter to the Extraordinary Party Conference. These are the failure to carry through a real Bolshevik policy of concentration of our work on the most important industries and factories and among the decisive sections of the American working class. Inasmuch as the main masses of Negro workers are also concentrated in the decisive industries of the country—coal, steel, marine—this lack of a concentration policy must necessarily affect the work of organization of the Negro working class. Second, an analysis of the shortcomings of our Party will also show that they are to a considerable extent traceable to the still existing lack of clarity in regard to the Leninist conception of the Negro question as a national question, *i.e.*, failure to understand this question as essentially a question of allies for the prolet-

arian revolution. This is expressed in a denial of the necessity for a special approach to the Negro workers, a tendency to blur over their special demands, failure to raise them. This is most glaringly expressed in our trade union and shop work as well as to some extent in the field of unemployment. A prevalent tendency in our revolutionary unions and to some extent in our unemployed councils is for these organizations to confine their efforts among Negroes to the placing of general demands such as equal rights on the job, no discrimination against Negroes, etc., and the failure to concretize these demands on the basis of the concrete conditions of the Negro workers in the individual shops, factories and neighborhoods. The tendency to gloss over the specific demands of the Negroes in some instances takes the form of actual resistance to struggle for these demands. This deviation in many cases is cloaked by seemingly radical phrases about no difference between Negro and white workers.

Behind this underestimation of the struggle for the demands of the Negro masses lies a deep-seated social democratic concept which regards the struggles of the Negro toilers against Jim Crowism and special persecution *not as a part of the general struggles of the working class against capitalism but as something separate and apart from that struggle, as a struggle which does not strengthen but rather detracts from the general class struggle.*

This reflects the survivals within our ranks of the old anti-revolutionary and essentially white chauvinist theory of the Lovestone renegades, the theory of the Negroes as "reserves of capitalist reaction." Without a continuous and vigorous fight both ideologically and organizationally against these dangerous tendencies, it will be impossible to carry through the task of the Fourteenth Plenum and the Open Letter in the field of Negro work.

The Open Letter reemphasizes the importance of the Negro question as a question of "allies of the American proletariat" and declares that "the Party can stand at the head of the national revolutionary struggle of the Negro masses against American imperialism only if it energetically carries through the decisions of the Fourteenth Plenum of the E. C. on the work among Negroes."

The main immediate task before the Party is the more energetic organization of the proletarian and semi-proletarian Negro masses into the Party and revolutionary mass organizations, particularly the revolutionary trade unions as an essential part of the carrying through of the policy of concentration. This task at the present time assumes tremendous importance from the standpoint of strengthening the hegemony of the working class and the leadership of the Party in the growing Negro national liberation struggles. The key to the successful carrying through of this task at the

present moment lies in the energetic putting forward and the conducting of the struggle for the special demands of the Negroes in connection with the Roosevelt National Recovery Act. The NIRA together with the Farm Relief Bill sharpens and legalizes the discrimination of Negro workers on the job and the robbery of the Negro poor farmers and sharecroppers on the plantations of the South. It means an all-around sharpening of the national oppression of the Negro people as witnessed in the new wave of lynchings in the South—Tuscaloosa, Decatur, Selma, Alabama. The struggle against this increased oppression of the Negro masses must become an integral part of whole campaign against the NIRA.

“In all mass actions, strikes and unemployed struggles the Party must pay particular attention in formulating practical demands, that it takes into consideration and gives expression to the special forms of exploitation, oppression and denial of the rights of the employed and unemployed Negro masses.” (Open Letter.)

The emphasis upon the development of economic struggles among the Negro toilers does not mean to slacken but on the contrary to increase in every way the struggle around the general issues of Negro liberation, such as Scottsboro and the fight against lynching. It is necessary to broaden out and deepen these struggles, bringing forward our full program of social equality and right of self-determination and building up the broadest united front on these issues. Our chief task, however, is to bring this struggle into the shops and factories and on the land, linking it up with the more immediate demands of the Negro toilers, making the factories the main base in the struggle for Negro liberation and our trade unions the main lever for the organization of the Negro working class. At the same time the revolutionary mass organizations and particularly the trade unions must come forward more energetically in the struggle on behalf of the political demands of the Negro toilers.

This must go hand in hand with the ruthless combatting of all forms of chauvinist and Jim Crow practices and the patient, systematic but persistent struggle against the ideology and influence of petty-bourgeois nationalists among the Negro toilers.

*Only on this basis will the Party be able to give leadership to the rapidly developing upsurge of the Negro masses and to build this movement into a powerful weapon of the revolutionary proletariat for the weakening and destruction of the rule of American imperialism.*

# Background of Recent Events in Cuba

By WILLIAM SIMONS

THE fall of Machado, brought about by the pressure of the toiling masses, and particularly by the general strike of the Cuban workers, marks the beginning of a period of struggles on a higher level than ever before, which will lead to the agrarian, anti-imperialist revolution in Cuba.

Several hundred thousand workers went on strike. Small merchants closed their stores. Doctors in the public hospitals refused medical aid to the wounded "porristas", Machado's hired thugs. Poor peasants in some sections helped the strikers with food.

It was the power of the workers, aided by sections of the peasantry and by the poor sections of the petty bourgeoisie of the cities that made it impossible for American imperialism to maintain Machado in power any longer. Machado was not overthrown by the might of an agrarian, anti-imperialist revolution wiping out imperialist and feudal conditions in Cuba. But the toiling masses of Cuba created such a condition by the general strike, by the complete paralysis of industry and commerce, that threatened not only the Machado regime but American wealth in Cuba. The Roosevelt Administration was thus compelled to take out Machado.

## THE CUBAN MASSES IN MOTION

The general strike was an explosive movement of the workers, of protest against their growing misery, of struggle for better conditions. The first strike, that of the 1,500 bus workers, began on July 14th and was under the leadership of the revolutionary National Labor Confederation [Confederacion Nacional Obrera de Cuba (C.N.O.C.)]. The National Labor Confederation and the Communist Party of Cuba urged support to the bus workers, this being one of the main slogans at the August First anti-war demonstrations. By August 3rd, there were already sixteen separate strikes. The August First demonstrations called by the Communist Party, larger than ever before, helped stimulate the deepening strike wave. Workers of one trade and industry after another, of one city after another, much beyond the influence of the C.N.O.C. and the C.P., went on strike. Many of them, like the railwaymen, struck, over

the heads of the reformist leaders of the Railway Brotherhood. Streetcar men, printers, chauffeurs, sugar workers, tobacco workers and other joined in. Some, like the tobacco workers, railwaymen, printers, telegraphers and post office workers, struck in sympathy, without formulating any demands for themselves; others, while supporting the bus workers, made demands of their own. The strike was organized against the will of the leaders of the A.B.C. and other factions of the bourgeois landlord opposition who urged calm and patience while the American interventionist Ambassador Welles "solved" the political situation of Cuba.

Sharp fights developed. In Marianao and in Mantillo, working class suburbs of Havana, the workers set up barricades on August 5th and fought with the police. Then came the August 7th massacre, when Machado's troops let loose machine guns on the crowd of 10,000 who marched joyfully to the Presidential Palace on the false rumor that Machado was about to resign. Twenty-six were killed and 160 wounded. On the 7th, Machado once more declared his "routine" martial law. To the 100 arrested in Havana on the 5th, were added 28 in Cienfuegos, 50 in Santa Clara, and 200 more in Havana, among them Joaquin Ordoqui, left wing railwayman. On the 8th, Machado made his disgusting pseudo-anti-imperialist plea to the Cuban people, to "sustain the Cuban government against foreign intervention." The general strike continued. On August 12th, Machado fled by airplane to Nassau, in the Bahama Islands (British possession).

#### BACKGROUND OF THE GENERAL STRIKE

The general strike developed out of a series of sharp conflicts. At the end of July, demonstrations of school teachers in Havana, Santa Clara, and Camaguey were attacked by the police, many being wounded. The teachers were demanding their back pay for eleven months. In Havana, a demonstration of Veterans of the War of Independence, for back pay of pensions, was similarly attacked. The demonstrations of August First were in most places attacked by the police and by the Machado gangsters of the "Porra," several workers being killed and many wounded, with the police also suffering casualties. Mass funerals of the murdered workers took place in Havana and in Santiago de Cuba on August 2nd, 3,000 workers attending the funeral in Santiago of Luisa Lavado, 17-year old clothing worker, a member of the Young Communist League of Cuba.

The August First demonstrations were not only anti-war, and in support of the striking bus workers, but they were against the Welles intervention as well. In Cienfuegos, the demonstrating

workers smashed the windows of two *Yankee firms*, the Woolworth stores, and the Cuban Electric Co. The demonstration in Havana was marching toward the *American Embassy*, when it was shot into by Machado's porristas. In Regla, just across the bay from Havana, a group of strikers fought against the police to prevent a *Standard Oil* tank from distributing gasoline to filling stations.

The misery of the masses had been increasing with the constant restriction of the sugar crop. The Machado government, in order to pay for the upkeep of its apparatus, particularly the army, and to pay interest on the loans to Wall Street, kept increasing taxes on the necessities of life. The number of unemployed grew to 700,000. The paltry relief given by the government consisted of lodgings to unemployed, in the old market-place "La Purisima" in Havana, and of feeding them slop.

Workers in many industries had struck in the past for betterment of conditions; but usually they would be robbed of the fruits of victory through betrayal by their reformist leaders, as in the Tobacco Workers Federation and in the Havana Streetcar-men's Union. Since 1925 there had been no large strike of sugar workers. The Havana Federation of Labor for long periods was under anarcho-syndicalist, reformist leadership, fighting against the revolutionary National Labor Confederation.

Since 1931 a marked revolutionary upsurge was evident. In that year, among the strikers were the laborers in the sugar mill "Niquero," 15,000 tobacco workers in Havana province, shoe workers in Matanzas, textile workers in Havana, and cigarette- and cigar-makers in Santa Clara. Hunger marches took place in the strategic provinces of Santa Clara, Camaguey and Oriente. Peasants' Leagues were organized in the northern part of Santa Clara province. Soldiers in Santiago and Holguin fraternized with the workers; policemen went on strike in Santiago de Cuba.

A real turn in the trade union movement of Cuba came with the calling by the C.N.O.C. of the Sugar Workers Conference in December 1932, where 32 sugar plantations were represented, and where steps were laid for the strike which took place early this year, when 20,000 walked out under the leadership of the Sugar Workers Industrial Union. It was a much larger strike than the sugar strike of 1925. Six provinces were represented. The spirit was militant. The strikes were prepared by action committees. They were led by strike committees elected by the workers. There was a close union of white and Negro workers. Jamaican Negroes, who were brought to the sugar mill "Havana" to scab, took the machetes (cutting knives) and then joined in with the strikers. Peasants in Santa Clara brought food to the strikers. In one mill, when the

company shut the workers up in the mill to compel them to grind the cane already stored up, the plantation workers freed their comrades. Armed defense groups were organized, which at times drove back the government troops. In some mills the workers succeeded in winning their demands, while in others they were beaten back by the brutality of the Rural Guards.

The National Labor Confederation has been carrying on activities to organize national unions in the sugar, tobacco, marine and transport industries. Red trade union oppositions were built, particularly among the streetcar men and the railwaymen. This widened the influence of the C.N.O.C. not only in Havana, but throughout the length of the land, and contributed to the readiness of the workers to go on strike before and after this August First.

The strikers, in all cases where they raised demands for themselves, have, to our knowledge, gone back with these demands won. And old scores were settled, too, dating back several years. Workers who had been fired for union activity in the past were put back to work. The working class of Cuba by means of the general strike was able to improve to some extent its working and living conditions. It has acquired a new sense of its growing power.

The largest previous general strike was on March 20, 1930, when 200,000 were out; but this was only a 24-hour protest strike. On August 4th, 1931, there were 50,000 out in Havana (with an estimated 50,000 in the rest of the country; the need of immediate support to the streetcar men's strike in Havana making it impossible to notify all the workers in Cuba, thus limiting the extent of the strike). Both of these were political strikes, including the demand for the release of all political prisoners. But the recent general strike, lasting two weeks, was not only a struggle for immediate demands of the workers and for the legality of the C.N.O.C., but was also a protest against the terror and misery imposed by Yankee imperialism through its tool, Machado.

#### YANKEE INTERVENTION

The general strike developed during the stay in Cuba of Sumner Welles, American Ambassador Extraordinary. What was the political situation that made it necessary for an experienced diplomat like Welles to be sent to Cuba?

The popular movement against Machado was rising. Strikes were increasing. The A.B.C. was continuing its terrorist campaign. There was sharp protest against the existent and threat-

ened new taxation. The sugar strike had taken place, threatening the profits of the American sugar companies; the armed defense groups of the strikers were a warning signal to the National City Bank and to F. D. Roosevelt. The masses were groaning under ever heavier taxation, and still Machado could not meet in full the interest payments on Wall Street loans. The bourgeois landlord opposition was talking "revolution," and, while they were not dangerous, some of their followers and other workers and peasants had begun in April an insurgent movement, arming themselves and taking to the hills. These armed bands were mostly of agricultural workers and peasants, revolting against their misery. In one place, a group of thirty had selected the sickle and hammer as their emblem. Wall Street was faced with the danger not of a revolt by the bourgeois landlord opposition leaders, but by a movement from below that threatened the very hold of American imperialism on Cuban wealth.

What were the political factors in the Cuban situation? (1) The parties inside of the Cuban legislature cooperating with the government. The Liberal Party (Machado's Party), the Popular Party and the Conservative Party. (2) The bourgeois landlord opposition parties. The Nationalist Union, whose outstanding candidate for the presidency of Cuba is Colonel Carlos Mendieta, and the A.B.C. group. (3) The revolutionary party of the Cuban working class, the Communist Party of Cuba, outlawed by Machado since 1925.

In August 1931, the bourgeois landlord opposition under the leadership of Menocal, re-elected President of Cuba in 1916 by Yankee bayonets, and of Mendieta, staged a so-called revolt, which was a flop before it started, rank and filers being shot down, while the leaders surrendered off the barren coast of Rio Verde, to be given every consideration as befits agents of American imperialism, and later under consular protection leaving Cuba for the United States.

#### THE A.B.C. BECOMES A PARTY

After the abortive August 1931 revolt, some students and professionals formed a secret organization, with cells of ten under a captain, to carry on terrorist activity. They bombed dance halls and other public places, terrorizing the population, and occasionally killing some police officer, or other Machado agent. For more than a year they carried on this activity; but the growth of the influence among the masses of the Communist Party with its clear anti-Machado and anti-imperialist program, made the leaders of the A.B.C. realize that they needed a program with which to ensnare

workers, farmers and students. At the end of 1932, they therefore issued their program, demagogic and reformist. They try through repetition to din into the minds of the masses that "The A.B.C. is the hope of Cuba." Their program is "New men, new ideas, new methods, reconquest of the lands, political freedom, social justice." Our Cuban comrades would say to this: "Palabras, puras palabras" (Words, just words).

Yankee imperialism, lord and master of Cuba, is not mentioned even once in the entire program. They talk of the "penetration of foreign capital" which "has completed the process of depriving the Cuban of his wealth." They conceal the semi-colonial nature of Cuba. The leaders of the A.B.C. propagate the fiction that the Cuban government is free and sovereign, even though the Platt Amendment is still a part of the Cuban constitution, even though American companies own the bulk of the wealth of Cuba, and American banks determine the policies of the Cuban government.

The leaders of the A.B.C. are going to "reconquer the land." How? By taking it away from the American sugar owners? It is no secret that 80 percent of Cuban sugar production is by Yankee companies. They have a better program. It consists of four parts.

"(1) Encouragement and protection of small rural property through a policy of interior colonization. (2) Adoption of measures leading to the gradual disappearance of the large plantations, such as a progressive land tax. (3) Limitation of the right of companies to buy lands, and the adoption of measures tending to the nationalization of these lands. (4) Recapture of concessions of mineral wealth, which have not been worked."

These measures will not change by one iota the semi-colonial status of Cuba; they will not change at all the ownership by the American sugar owners of the best Cuban lands. The proposed measures are the same methods put forward by reformists everywhere, who must seem to appease the hunger of the masses for land, and yet who do not dare to fight against imperialism. These are similar to the proposals made for Puerto Rico by the Nationalist Party of Puerto Rico, whose heroic measure is also to "tax the absentee landlords out of existence." The leaders of the A.B.C. not only do not favor the taking of land away from the imperialists; they are opposed to any movement by the peasants now against their land being robbed. The A.B.C. leaders are opposed to the cancellation of the debts of the peasants or to any other effective measure to help the peasants now.

The leaders of the A.B.C., the "left" of the bourgeois landlord opposition, are the only party of this opposition that has elaborated any extended program. The Nationalist Union confined its pro-

gram to demands for democratic rights, a new constitution and new elections. Colonel Mendieta, on August 22nd, gave his conception of what he stands for, when, with President Cespedes at his side on a balcony of the Presidential Palace, he waved to the crowds who came to welcome him back to Cuba, remarking "Well, there is liberty, now." On August 15th, in a newspaper interview, in New York City (*Evening Journal*), Mendieta announced that Cuban obligations to Wall Street would be paid, but he requested "refinancing over a longer term of years and at a lower rate of interest". He proposed that millions of acres of government lands should be cut up into small farms (note: government lands, American land is not to be touched). He proposed also a lowering of the tariff on Cuban sugar imported into the United States. But not a word about the eight-hour day, about unemployment insurance and relief, about ridding the country of American imperialism.

Menocal, old Yankee servant, wealthy plantation owner, also announces that he will organize a party for the coming presidential elections in February 1934.

The A.B.C., while recruiting its members mostly from students and professional elements, does not represent the interests of even the poor sections of the petty-bourgeoisie; it represents the program of the big bourgeoisie and of the landlords. Its program fully guarantees the wealth of American imperialism and of the native bourgeoisie and landlords. Its program, while safeguarding the interests of the native and imperialist rulers, is aimed to hold back the revolutionary upsurge of the masses, with vague promises.

The A.B.C., even after the issuance of its program, which made it a political party, still carried on its individualist, terrorist campaign. It did not seek to arouse mass action. They, the self-chosen leaders, the "hope of the Cuban people" would make the revolution for the masses. The masses were to be patient, to be calm, and not to interfere with the plans of the A.B.C. leaders. This terrorist campaign of the A.B.C. was met by increased Machado terror, directed particularly against the working class and its leaders.

#### STAND TOWARD AMERICAN IMPERIALISM

What was the position of the various groups with reference to American imperialism? (1) Machado had the full support of American imperialism. Huge loans were extended to him. American Ambassador Guggenheim, Welles' predecessor, used to appear at public banquets, where Machado would use the presence of Guggenheim to show how good his regime was, and that he had the confidence of the American government. (2) The Nationalist Union (Union Nacionalista) had been for many years concentrat-

ing on Washington, to win it over to its side, to have the American government oust Machado and substitute them. Their leaders were not opposed to American imperialism. They simply wanted Machado out. The revolt of August 1931 was, in so far as these leaders are concerned, not intended as a mass revolt, but merely as sufficient show of armed force against Machado, to convince Washington that Machado could not last and should therefore be replaced. (3) The A.B.C. leaders, as can be seen from their program, were not endangering American imperialism. They also merely wanted Machado out. (4) Menocal, an old tool of American imperialism, would not do anything to hurt American interests. Since he had lost considerable prestige because of the abortive August 1931 revolution, Menocal could only redeem himself by leading a successful revolution. He therefore made statements against the "mediation" proposed by Welles, but his friends in Havana at the same time quoted him in favor of "mediation." (5) The Communist Party has from its inception in 1925 carried on an active struggle against American imperialism and against Machado who was carrying out policies in line with those of Washington and Wall Street.

#### THE STRATEGY OF AMERICAN IMPERIALISM

The Roosevelt Administration wished to avoid an armed revolution against Machado, since this might go further than the bourgeois landlord leaders intended. It wished to establish an agreement between Machado and the bourgeois landlord opposition leaders, for constitutional reform, for amnesty and for honest elections in 1934. Welles succeeded in getting the consent of Machado for the negotiations to be begun. A so-called "Revolutionary Junta" had been created in New York City, of representatives of the bourgeois landlord groups, the Nationalist Union, the A.B.C., the Student Directory and the University Professors. The problem for American imperialism was to get the Revolutionary Junta, or the organizations belonging to it, to become a party to the "mediation" proceedings, which was actually intervention by Welles in the affairs of the Cuban people. All of these groups continually refer to Cuba as free and sovereign. How then could they be gotten to agree to the Welles "mediation," to intervention by Welles, Ambassador of the United States of America, which had forced the Platt Amendment into the Cuban constitution at the point of the bayonet? Through the fiction that he merely brought together the conflicting parties to come to an agreement themselves. And it was the A.B.C. leaders, "the hope of the Cuban people," who plucked the chestnuts out of the fire for Welles and Roosevelt and Woodin.

They presented an ultimatum to the Revolutionary Junta: if the Junta did not agree to "mediation," the A.B.C. would withdraw from the Junta. The "Revolutionary" Junta dissolved, permitting its component parts to fall in line. The A.B.C. told the Junta that Menocal had been given 30 days and then another 30 days in which to get the funds for an armed uprising in Cuba, and had failed. Therefore, the A.B.C. was ready to go into the "mediation."

They give a further reason in Bulletins 1 and 2 (July 20th and 27th, 1933) of the A.B.C. "Since the Machado government could not maintain order, thus creating a growing danger to foreign property, and since the United States government, by the Platt Amendment and the Monroe Doctrine, guarantees property of foreign powers, North American intervention is inevitable. This cannot be ignored by the A.B.C. nor by the Cuban people." Here once more they shield Yankee imperialism, for it would intervene, not to protect its own property in Cuba, but merely to protect the property of other powers, British, Spanish, etc. These A.B.C. leaders who call themselves "revolutionists" because, as they say, they "propose to make a complete change in Cuban public life, in politics, economics and social life" argue that "mediation" had to be accepted, "because revolutionary tactics must be based on realities." Realism is thus made the excuse for servile groveling before American imperialism.

These A.B.C. leaders argue that through "mediation" they avoided armed intervention. These are the gains they claim from "mediation": (1) They have won applause from the Cuban people, by showing that the A.B.C. wants to solve problems to suit the Cuban people, without violent methods when it is not able to carry them through. (But these reformist leaders do not believe in any revolution at all by the broad masses of the population; they have no faith in those masses. Instead of the "old men with unclean hands," the "old leaders" of the Cuban people, the A.B.C. leaders modestly offer themselves). (2) "The A.B.C.," they state, "was recognized by the United States government as a factor, as a patriotic organization driven into secrecy by the abnormal conditions of Cuba." (They have won recognition from their imperialist masters, and they glory in it. And they also apologize for ever having resorted to underground organization). (3) They have won "international recognition of the justice of our cause." (Among capitalists and liberals.) (4) And finally they won "an opportunity to prepare the adequate organs, during the truce, for an early revolutionary attempt." This revolutionary attempt is evidently to work with Welles to put over as president a diplomat of the old school, Cespedes, a loyal servant of Wall Street. "Revolution,"

they go on, "is not necessarily an armed struggle, but a complete change of society at a given period. This supposes that there are revolutions which can be carried through from the vantage point of power." This is evidently said to justify their becoming the vanguard in accepting the "mediation" of Welles. To make their revolution or "fundamental change," they became later a part of the government set up by the Washington government.

#### MACHADO BALKS

Mediation began. Welles was busy meeting three delegates of the Machado government. Then he would meet with delegates from the opposition. A constitution was being considered. An amnesty law was approved by the Machado legislature, but not only did this grant amnesty to the opposition, but it included amnesty for dirty election work by Machado henchmen.

But Machado threw a monkey wrench into the proceedings. He declared to the Cuban Congress that Welles was acting as an individual, and not for the United States government. He announced furthermore that he would hold office until his term was up, in May 1935. In the meantime, the general strike was already shaping up; industrial activity was being rapidly paralyzed; shipping stopped. Machado's massacre of August 7th only added fuel to the popular rage; it stiffened the general strike movement. The army leaders withdrew their support from Machado and he crumbled. Forced to flee, he barely saved his life from the avenging masses.

#### THE CESPEDES GOVERNMENT SET UP

The new government, with Carlos Manuel de Cespedes as provisional president, was set up under Welles' supervision, including members of the various bourgeois landlord opposition groups. Cespedes was Secretary of State under Zayas, recommended by General Crowder, American interventionist in 1919. It is a government of individuals who have worked and are willing to work with American imperialism. Martial law was continued by Cespedes against the strikers. The avenging actions of the masses against Machado's brutal henchmen are being stopped by government troops. The Cespedes government aided the beast Machado, and his intimate followers, to escape the fury of the outraged people. And Welles was also a party to this.

What is the program of the new government? Cespedes has so far (August 27) not announced any specific program. He has indulged in generalities, promising "prosperity and a free people." Capitalist newspaper correspondents from Havana stated openly

that no program would be announced without Welles' approval. But the Roosevelt New Deal for Cuba seems to be the guiding line for the Cespedes government. The Cespedes government was born puny and weak, with Welles as the midwife, and with oxygen tanks rushed on board American cruisers to Havana and Manzanillo. The function of the Cespedes government was sharply put by Col. Frederick Palmer, veteran war correspondent, in a dispatch to the *New York Times* on August 13th from Havana: "President Cespedes faces the serious problem of stopping the strike and preventing the successful mass revolution from becoming too revolutionary."

#### PROGRAM OF ACTION OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF CUBA

The Communist Party of Cuba, which was active in spreading the strike wave, issued on August 3rd a Manifesto dealing with the general strike, urging the strikers to fight for their immediate demands, and raising issues which would lead to the agrarian, anti-imperialist revolution. The Program of Action put forward in this Manifesto is as follows:

"The Communist Party calls upon all strikers, upon the working class in general, upon all toiling masses, to link up the struggle for their immediate demands with the fight for the following program of action drawn up by the Communist Party; and to remain firm in this glorious struggle for the immediate demands by the workers in the various industries:

"For the eight-hour day in the sugar industry, in the commercial establishments and in all other industries in the country: for the payment of back wages to the sugar workers; to the teachers and to all government employees; for immediate unemployment relief; for workers' control of the administration of the old age pension laws; for social insurance against unemployment—all at the expense of the bosses and the government.

"For the payment of back debts to the sharecroppers (colónos); against robbery of land from the peasants; and for the cancellation of the debts of the peasants.

"Against the hunger quota imposed on Cuban sugar consumed in the United States; against the revision of tariff rates in favor of the Yankee exporters; against the payment of debts to the Yankee bankers; against the new taxation laws and the present Emergency Taxation Law.

"For Negro equality; and the right of self-determination of the Negroes in the black belt of Oriente, where the Negroes constitute the majority of the population.

"Against the bloody Machado regime; against his terror; for the immediate freedom of political prisoners; for the right of assembly, press, strike and organization; for the legality of all revolutionary organizations, including the Communist Party.

"For the support of the struggle of the insurgents; against the leaders of the bourgeois landlord opposition; against the 'diplomatic' intervention of the 'mediator' Welles and his threat of military in-

tervention; against the Platt Amendment; for the withdrawal of the Yankee marines from Guantanamo; for the national liberation of Cuba."

It urged the formation of self-defense groups. It called on the soldiers and sailors to fraternize with the workers and peasants. It called for demonstrations in the streets. It ended with "Down with Machado and the leaders of the bourgeois-landlord opposition! Oust Welles and the Yankee marines from the national territory! Down with the military intervention threatened by Yankee imperialism through its mouthpiece Welles!"

On August 11th, when the Cespedes government was being formed, the Program of Action was amended to include: "Against the terror regime instituted by the new government, which maintains the State of War and which closed down the Workers Center."

The Communist Party of Cuba is organizing actions of the masses, of the workers, of the unemployed, of other poor strata of the population, against the Cespedes government and against Yankee imperialism. Ambassador Welles issued a statement on August 20th declaring that the chief needs were "maintenance of public order and guarantees for life, property and all individual rights by authorities of the government." *La Prensa*, Spanish daily in New York City, in its August 24th issue, runs an eight-column headline to the effect that "Communist Activity in Cuba Is Worrying the Government." The Communist Party of Cuba has increased its activities and influence in the past few months, and particularly during and since the general strike.

The practical, every-day work of the Communist Party is aimed to develop the mass struggles, to broaden them, to raise them to ever higher and higher levels, and to bring about the agrarian, anti-imperialist revolution.

The nature of this revolution was described in this way by the Communist Party of Cuba in a pamphlet issued in Spanish at Havana several months ago. (See pamphlet: *The Communist Party and the Problems of the Revolution in Cuba*, page 11.)

"The fundamental characteristic of the revolution in Cuba is the struggle of the toiling masses (workers, peasants, Negroes and the lower exploited sections of the petty bourgeoisie of the cities) under the hegemony of the working class, against feudal exploitation, against colonial slavery and for the national liberation of the oppressed Cuban people. The revolution in Cuba is in its first democratic bourgeois stage and therefore takes on an anti-feudal and anti-imperialist form. The victory of the agrarian anti-imperialist revolution will be achieved through the alliance of the working class and of the peasantry (drawing in the poor sections of the petty bourgeoisie of the cities) under the hegemony of the working class

and under the leadership of the Communist Party, by the overthrow of the power of imperialism, by the overthrow of the feudal elements (large landowners) and of the native bourgeoisie allied with them, and by the establishment of the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants on the basis of Soviets."

#### ROOSEVELT'S NEW DEAL FOR CUBA

Roosevelt's New Deal for Cuba, to which the Cespedes government looks for salvation, has four points: "(1) Establishment of the employees of Cuban sugar and tobacco plantations on small parcels of land on which they could produce their own subsistence when unemployed. (2) Reorganization of the internal and external debts of the Cuban government. (3) Inclusion of Cuba with Mexico and the United States and its possessions in a regional sugar-control agreement. (4) A new reciprocal tariff agreement between the United States and Cuba designed to improve trade relations."

Point 1—Small parcels of land. Whose land? The American sugar companies? The sugar plantation workers work only two months in the year. This means assigning special lands to them for almost the whole year, to about 100,000 workers (figure only approximate). Will the American sugar companies grant this? The only time workers were allowed to raise food on company soil was when they received this privilege as their wages (getting no cash wages at all). And how about clothing and shelter? He must exchange food for other necessities. This means creating a new peasantry, when the existing peasantry is losing its land. Land to the peasants can be won only by taking it from the imperialist and large native landowners. The history of Mexico since the Revolution of 1910 is one of repeated promises by the governments of land to the peasants, and the repeated breaking of those promises. Instead of giving land to the peasants, the land is being steadily taken away from the peasants, in all colonial and semi-colonial countries, as well as from farmers in the capitalist countries, including the United States.

Point 2—Reorganization of the debts. How? The debts, says Roosevelt, must be paid. And Cespedes, Mendieta and the other bourgeois landlord leaders agree. Should there be any postponement of payment, as recommended by Mendieta, there will be additional interest to pay for each postponement (as is being done by the Chase National Bank now). Lower rate of interest as Mendieta desires? Wall Street will demand its pound of flesh. And any small lowering of the interest rate will prove of little help to the Cuban government in meeting its heavy budget, and will be of no help to the unemployed, to the low-paid workers, to the starving peasants, and to the small merchant.

According to the *New York Times* (August 22nd), Cuba is confronted by debt service payments to \$8,459,140, or 19 percent of the estimated revenue for the fiscal year 1933-1934. This consists of interest, payment of part of the principal, and commissions on loans mainly from Speyer and Morgan banking houses. But in addition, there must be paid \$5,700,000 in interest and part payment of principal on the public works debt. To pay all or any part of these payments means to collect it through present or new taxes from the already impoverished Cuban masses.

Point 3—Sugar control agreement. Another “voluntary” agreement for the benefit of the American sugar growers in Cuba. The Chadbourne Plan of 1929, made in America, caused a heavy drop in Cuban sugar production, reducing employment, and at the same time providing \$42,000,000 from the Cuban treasury, to make good for the National City Bank worthless paper from bankrupt sugar mills. According to the tentative allotment in the proposed sugar marketing agreement in Washington, Cuba is to have the right to import into the United States only 1,700,000 tons of raw sugar, including 110,000 tons of refined sugar. This is a decline of 190,000 tons below the 1932-33 figure. Cuban interests are asking for 2,000,000 tons; but even under this figure the Cuban government has been unable to balance its budget. A United Press report from Havana of August 18th, states that “unless there is a readjustment of the tax system and finances generally there is danger of a deficit of perhaps \$10,000,000 in the budget” (this deficit in a budget of forty million dollars—W.S.) Readjustment of taxes means putting added burdens on the masses through taxes on necessities.

Point 4—A “new” reciprocal tariff agreement designed to improve trade relations. Whose trade relations? Those of the American exporters of goods into Cuba and of the American sugar companies in Cuba. The old “reciprocal” treaty of 1903 gave the Cubans a rebate of 20 percent under the sugar tariff, but this helped mainly the American sugar companies in Cuba. And Cuba under the same “reciprocal” agreement allowed American materials into Cuba at a tariff 25, 30 and even 40 percent lower than the figure for other countries. Such “neighborly reciprocity”!

And now comes a new “reciprocal” agreement. There will be a further tariff reduction by the United States for the sugar which will be allowed in from Cuba. Who will benefit? The American sugar owners. This is the part that is supposed to help Cuba. The Cubans will then lower tariffs on American imports to Cuba. This is in line with the energetic drive of American imperialism for the markets of South America and of the Caribbean countries (parti-

cularly after the sharpening of conflicts at the London World Economic Conference) to sell the large accumulated stocks of goods under the National Recovery Act, which the workers of the United States cannot buy because of unemployment and lowering of living standards. This further lowering of tariff on American goods will flood the Cuban market with American goods, at higher prices, will cause a falling off in production by the native light industries, with corresponding growth in unemployment, adding to the present deep misery and starvation of the Cuban masses.

Under this New Deal, American interests will extract more profits out of the blood and bone of the poverty stricken Cuban toilers. American sugar companies and the National City Bank will strengthen their hold, as against the other foreign or Cuban owners. Cuba will become tied up more closely with the needs of Wall Street, particularly for war. Further colonizations of Cuba is the aim of this heralded New Deal for Cuba, to be offered not as a proposal from the American government, but merely as a suggestion on the part of "Friends of Cuba."

#### SUPPORT FOR THE CUBAN REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT

The magnitude and depth of the Cuban strike wave and of the popular movement against Machado, and the added importance of Cuba to American imperialism as the key to the Caribbean—these factors lend added importance to Cuba from the viewpoint of the world proletarian revolution. The general strike was a serious blow to American imperialism, which is now trying to stem the rising tide of revolution in Cuba. American cruisers were sent to Cuba, in order to threaten the strikers and to support the Cespedes martial law decree, aimed to keep the victorious masses off the street, to protect private property, and to set up a strong government, safe for continuation and strengthening of American domination in Cuba.

The Communist Party and the Anti-Imperialist League carried on a campaign against the intervention of the "mediatory" Welles. "Cuban Week," was planned for July 23rd-29th, when open air meetings were held in New York City. The *Daily Worker* ran a whole page of articles on Cuba in its July 26th issue. Telegrams were sent to President Roosevelt and to President Machado. The telegram to the Roosevelt Administration after the August 7th massacre was as follows: "We protest against Welles intervention and against the threat of sending armed forces to Cuba. We hold American imperialism, which maintained Machado in power for eight years, responsible for Machado terror, for declaration of martial law, and for shooting hundreds of unarmed Cuban workers. We demand end of Welles intervention. We demand nullification

of Platt Amendment and evacuation of Guantanamo naval base." The telegram to Machado was: "We protest against your August 7th massacre of hundreds of unarmed workers all over Cuba. We insist on the right of the Cuban workers to organize and strike. We demand immediate termination of state of martial law and immediate release of Joaquin Ordoqui and of all other jailed strikers."

When Machado was overthrown, the following telegram was sent from the New Star Casino meeting in New York City to President Cespedes: "We protest against martial law used against strikers and demand that it end immediately. We demand that you respect the rights of the toilers to organize and strike, rights of assembly, free speech, press and the right to bear arms. We demand recognition of legality of workers organizations, particularly of the Communist Party. We demand the immediate release of Joaquin Ordoqui and other jailed strikers and political prisoners." The same meeting sent the following telegram to President Roosevelt: "We regard your New Deal for Cuba as an imperialist weapon against the toiling masses of Cuba. The Cespedes government which you have set up is continuing Machado policies, martial law, starvation wages, outlawing of workers organizations, denying them elementary democratic rights of assembly, free speech, press, organization and strike. We protest against sending of American warships to Cuba. We demand immediate withdrawal of American cruisers from Cuba, evacuation of Guantanamo naval base, nullification of Platt Amendment and cancellation of Wall Street loans to Machado."

On August 1st, over 1,000 workers participated in a demonstration before the Cuban Consulate in New York City. At the Cuban Conference on August 16th called by the Anti-Imperialist League, 235 delegates, representing 35,000 workers, were present, and worked out concrete measures for supporting the Cuban revolutionary movement.

#### REACTION OF THE OTHER GROUPS

How did the other parties react? The capitalist press that had praised Machado for many years for his firmness, now that Wall Street gave the cue, suddenly discovered that the firmness was really murder. The liberal press, *Nation* and *New Republic*, welcomed the fall of Machado, and the new government, calling for revocation of the Platt Amendment and for help to Cespedes' government. To them the sending of cruisers, the flag following the dollar, is to be avoided, although they support, of course, American

investments in foreign countries, including colonies. The self-styled liberal *World-Telegram* in an editorial on August 23rd, cries out: "Don't Meddle in Cuba," on the ground that "We have our hands full at home." But American imperialism has long hands and they reach out to all parts of the world, the hands even getting longer and longer. They praise Welles for his handling the Cuban situation with "great skill and restraint." They admit "the dictatorship by private American capital over most of Cuba's economic life is at the root of many of her difficulties," but make no proposals for getting rid of this dictatorship. They do however present an alternative: "The only way for Washington to run Cuba is to annex the island," but they console themselves: "Fortunately that is not our policy." Behind this barrage of words, is support of American policy toward Cuba. The *New York Times* in an editorial on August 21st, indicates that Roosevelt's New Deal for Cuba is a deal in futures, and not an immediate matter. After mentioning the opposition of American beet sugar growers to any increased quota for Cuban sugar imports, the editorial ends: "Until the Cubans themselves are more thoroughly settled down, it will be just as well to postpone plans for debt adjustment and for reciprocal trade."

The Socialist Party of America, in the *New Leader*, discovered the Cuban working class (crushed, they said in 1926) and platonically wished them well. At the Socialist-controlled Continental Congress in Washington on May 6th-7th, 1933, the only reference to Cuba was the demand "for an end of recognition of the Machado regime, and for the revoking of the Platt Amendment." Not a word about the need for a revolution to take away all the property of the American imperialists in Cuba. The demands of the Socialists are essentially the same as the demands of the liberal press cited above.

The *Militant*, Trotskyite organ, of August 12th, said: "A definite break must be made with the errors of opportunism and adventurism, which find their expression in the confusion of national and class slogans and terrorist tendencies. The Left Opposition of the Cuban Party is conducting an intense struggle for the correct Leninist policy." No explanation at all is given, no examples from life, of these charges against the Communist Party of Cuba. But the Left Opposition of the Cuban Party is credited by them with the correct Leninist policy. Who and what is this "Left" opposition in Cuba, whose policy is endorsed so wholeheartedly by the American Trotskyite renegades?

## THE "LEFT" OPPOSITION IN CUBA

The leaders of this opposition are Sandalio Junco and Marcos Villarreal. It is an unprincipled opposition of elements expelled from the Communist Party of Cuba, because of their opposition to the turn to mass work begun in 1930.

What is their line? They deny the radicalization of the Cuban working class: they deny the leading role of the working class in the anti-imperialist revolution; they even underestimate the working class and exaggerate the role of the petty-bourgeoisie, from whose ranks most of them spring. They state that the working class of Cuba "is incapable of developing by itself an independent movement." Strikes, according to these "left" oppositionists are "a barren sacrifice." As to the revolution in Cuba, "it is impossible to make a revolution in Cuba until the working class of the United States has taken over power." This Junco condemns the working class of Cuba to a policy of meek and supine suffering until we make the revolution in the United States, and then say to the Cuban workers: "Now you can make your revolution."

As to the bourgeois landlord opposition, this "left" opposition makes no distinction between the leaders and the rank and file, declaring that the leaders of the A.B.C. are sincerely trying "to carry the struggle further, against the slavery of the sharecropper, against the monopoly of certain imperialist companies. . . ." "The bourgeois faction in the opposition . . . have carried on a revolutionary struggle." With such a conception of the role of the leaders of the bourgeois landlord opposition, it is no wonder that the policy of the "left" opposition has been to make the Communist Party and the working class the tail end of the bourgeois landlord opposition movement.

This counter-revolutionary Junco-Villarreal group urges the leaders of the Communist Party of Cuba "not to attack the leaders of the A.B.C. so violently, to use a more skilful tactic . . ." the unmasking of these A.B.C. leaders, the "left" opposition calls "insulting." Surely the present action of the A.B.C. leaders, their acting as the spearhead for American imperialism in the "mediation" of Welles, their participation in the Cespedes government, their support of Roosevelt's sending of cruisers to Cuba—surely these acts prove the justness of the criticism of these A.B.C. leaders by the Communist Party of Cuba.

This "left" opposition of Junco and Company opposed the participation of the Communist Party of Cuba in the elections of November 1932, comparing it with Russia in 1905. They argue: "Lenin pointed out the revolutionary necessity at that time of boy-

cotting the Duma, in view of the existing objective situation and the immediate probability of an insurrection," thus comparing the insurrection by the proletariat of Russia, with a rumored armed revolt by the bourgeois landlord opposition (which did not take place). Should this have kept the Communist Party of Cuba out of the elections in November 1932? By no means. The "left" opposition, having faith in the leaders of the bourgeois landlord opposition, and following a policy of making the proletariat the tail end of their movement, tried to subordinate the independent movement of the proletariat to the program and activities of Menocal, Mendieta and the A.B.C. leaders. The Communist Party of Cuba, following its policy of developing independent struggles of the working class, took advantage of the parliamentary elections to mobilize workers and peasants for the program and activity of the Party. It registered thousands of votes, it increased its influence tremendously among the workers and peasants.

Junco and Company unite with reformist trade union leaders against the revolutionary National Labor Confederation of Cuba. Junco and Company declare that "struggles, strikes, all is condemned to failure... every time one section of the working class goes on strike, it becomes a barren sacrifice by the masses."

What a revolutionary outlook! No strikes. No revolution in Cuba until the working class takes over power in the United States (how like Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution, no building of Socialism in the Soviet Union until the proletariat of Europe revolts). Reliance on the reformist leaders to build the labor movement. The A.B.C. leaders are revolutionary. The bourgeois landlord opposition will make an insurrection. Therefore the Communist Party should not take part in parliamentary elections. This is the "revolutionary", "left" opposition of Cuba, whose "Leninist" policy is endorsed 100 per cent by Cannon and Company, the American Trotskyites. You are welcome to them, gentlemen. The Communist Party of the U.S.A. will support the Communist Party of Cuba in its fight against Junco and Company, ideological supporters of the bourgeois landlord opposition.

The workers and peasants of Cuba, with the support of the poor strata of the petty-bourgeoisie of the cities, under the leadership of the Communist Party of Cuba, will carry through successfully a revolution directed against imperialism as well as feudalism, establishing in Cuba a government of workers and peasants, on the basis of Soviets. And in this struggle they will have ever-increasing support of the Communist Party of the U.S.A.

AUTHOR'S NOTE: *The revolutionary upsurge of the toiling masses of Cuba, which caused the downfall of the bloody Machado regime, has now swept aside the Cespedes government. Strikes are spreading on sugar plantations. Four sugar mills are reported to have been seized by the workers, three of them of American ownership. The army rank and file kicked out their officials, and fraternized with the workers. In Cienfuegos and Cruces, workers are reported to have set up Comites Conjunto (Joint Committees) which are the beginnings of Soviets. Anti-Yankee sentiment is growing and expressing itself on the streets. The influence of the Communist Party and of the National Labor Confederation is growing.*

*The sending of warships, cruisers and destroyers to Cuba by the Roosevelt Administration, with the entire Atlantic Fleet held in readiness, is aimed to crush this rising revolutionary wave. Warships are sent, while Roosevelt hypocritically denies any intention to intervene. Roosevelt hopes that the Cuban people will "obtain as rapidly as possible a government of their own choosing," but it is precisely because Welles did not select the Revolutionary Junta and is not yet sure of it, that warships are sent. This Junta already guarantees payment of debts to Wall Street and promises protection of foreign property.*

*Events in Cuba are changing rapidly from day to day; one cannot say how long the present or similar governments will last. But one can be sure that the Cuban masses will carry their fight forward, on higher and higher levels, against feudalism and against imperialism. And in their fight, any assistance from the working class of the United States in particular and from the world proletariat as a whole, will be of great help. The Communist Party of the United States is already raising the cry: "Hands off Cuba!"*

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# The Intensified Drive Toward Imperialist War

By W. WEINSTONE

## I.

**T**HE present intensification of the crisis is constantly steering the world deeper into the new cycle of revolutions and wars. The Twelfth Plenum of the E. C. C. I. recorded this approach a year ago in connection with the end of relative capitalist stabilization. The capitalist world, driven by an unprecedented economic crisis which now makes the old distribution of the world among the imperialist powers insupportable, and driven by the revolutionary and national revolutionary forces which are menacing it on account of the crisis and the danger in the very existence of the Soviet Union, the land of the mighty advance of Socialism, signifying it by the brilliant example which it shows to the enslaved of all capitalist and colonial countries—the capitalist world is feverishly arming itself for a new imperialist world war and, simultaneously, for a predatory war of intervention against the Soviet Union.

The special feature of the international situation at present consists in the most intimate interlocking of the economic, diplomatic and military measures of the imperialists against one another and against the Soviet Union—the steps by which they very concretely and as rapidly as possible seek to find a solution for the crisis upon the backs of the toilers and over their corpses in the mass murder of an imperialist war and of the military intervention against the Soviet Union. Every one of the big imperialist powers is participating in the imperialist war which is being prepared as well as in the intervention. Their war interests, however, dictate to them whether it would be most favorable for them to fan the flames of the war first or of intervention, even though they would so gladly like to “solve” their own indissoluble antagonisms at the expense of the Soviet Union. Stalin, already at the Sixteenth Party Congress of the C. P. of the Soviet Union, very clearly established the dialectical connection between the imperialist war and intervention. In this connection he stated the following:

“Therefore, when the capitalist contradictions begin to intensify, the bourgeoisie always directs its glances towards the Soviet Union. Wouldn’t it be possible to solve one or another of the contradictions of capitalism, or all of them together, at the expense of the

Soviet Union, at the expense of this land of the Soviets, this fortress of the revolution, since through its strivings it already revolutionizes the working class and the colonies, hinders new wars, disturbs the re-distribution of the world and does not permit the capitalists to spread themselves out to the immense market of the Soviet Union which they need so badly now in view of the economic crisis? Hence the tendency arises to adventurous attacks upon the Soviet Union and intervention. This tendency must become strengthened on account of the developing economic crisis!"

The interweaving of the preparations for war and intervention and the interlocking of the burning imperialist contradictions, which have already resulted in a war in the Far East, today everywhere lead to a very high warlike tension. In this situation all this interweaving becomes less and less of a retarding factor for a solution by means of war, but, on the contrary, becomes the very factor which through the unprecedented accumulation of war materials promotes all the necessary provocations for launching the war. The interlocking of all the contradictions and antagonisms has today become fertile soil for accelerated war provocations. Any apparently small event can set the war hordes aflame.

The following contradictions are coming into the foreground as such direct instigations to war:

a. *The Contradictions Between the Capitalist World and the Soviet Union.* This main contradiction in the entire world, the contradiction between decaying (imperialist) capitalism in its worst stages and the unrestrained growing Socialism on one-sixth of the surface of the globe, becomes more intense every day, and is now being fanned by the Japanese with the protection of British imperialism, the chief organizer of intervention at present, into an anti-Soviet war.

b. *The contradiction between the French Imperialist Bloc (France, Belgium, Poland, Czecho-Slovakia, Rumania, Jugo-Slavia) and the Anti-Versailles Powers (Germany, Italy, Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria).* The struggle around the Versailles system, during the throttling economic crisis, has now matured in a direct preliminary war situation in Central Europe, which is enslaved by the Versailles Treaty. This is being very much accelerated by the open fascist dictatorship in Germany, with its most feverish arming for war (increased manufacture of arms which was shown by an increase in iron and steel production in the last quarter by 20 per cent) and by the counter-preparations of the French bloc to take so-called preventive measures which are bristling with armaments. French imperialism and its vassals are at present pursuing the line of warlike entrenchment of the Versailles robber peace. The anti-Versailles powers, especially fascist Germany, see the only possible imperialist

revision by means of war and a new "Versailles". In the diplomatic war preparations at the "Disarmament" Conference, both camps make use of the most deceptive pacifist maneuvers. But German and Italian fascism are making very special efforts in order to gain time in this way to catch up as rapidly as possible with the military superiority of the enemy.

While Hitler is already commencing "war-planned economy" in the country itself as rapidly as possible and wants to bring the chauvinist wave over into a war mood, at the same time he fervently preaches the "reconciliation of the peoples", the "unconditional desire for peace" and Germany's "faithfulness to its treaties", "democratic" French imperialism is developing its pacifism by phrases on "the struggle of democracy against fascism", in the direction of open war, instigating support of the direct military war preparations. The Franco-German antagonism fits in with the old Franco-Italian antagonism which has been intensified by the Versailles Treaty and for that reason pushes the antagonism between Germany and Italy on account of Austria's "Anschluss" and influence in Southeast Europe into the background as of less importance.

The imperialist "solution" of the strategically important problem of Austria as a means of passage and as a battleground, which has now become such a burning question in the most comprehensive war preparations—along with the military arrangements between the French vassals (Jugo-Slavia, Czecho-Slovakia) and the anti-Versailles powers—the diplomatic struggle between Italy and Germany is being mainly carried out on the inner-political arena of Austria. After the establishment of the Dollfuss dictatorship, Italy made Austria its vassal. As against this, Germany, through its Austrian agents, is making desperate attempts to inwardly "unify" Austria, but, nevertheless, in view of the "inner-political" successes of Italy and of its own outer political isolation, is also seeking ways of compromising, even by making use of the "neutral" Hungarian "mediation" in order to be able to forge the troubled German-Italian "friendship" into a war alliance as rapidly as possible.

The contradiction of the Versailles Treaty which is becoming apparent for capitalist Europe is now being more and more firmly interwoven with the Anglo-French antagonism. England wants to utilize it for its own aims—for weakening France, for assuring its leading role in the anti-Soviet war, inasmuch as it first wants to prevent a war decision and wants to guide it in the direction of intervention against the Soviet Union.

*c. The Antagonism Between the United States and Japan.* This is today in the foreground as the result of Japan's initiative in the war against China, as the breeding-ground of imperialist contra-

dictions and antagonisms for the domination of the Pacific and of China. The main antagonism of the imperialist world, the Anglo-American antagonism and rivalry, lurks behind it. This moved England to practically re-establish the alliance with Japan, despite the severe trade war and the bitter tariff war with Japan in India, while also pursuing its objectives as leader in the anti-Soviet struggle. This moved America to endeavor to get French support against the Anglo-Japanese rapprochement, in which it was unsuccessful at first.

The intensification of the Anglo-American antagonism and thereby of the basic contradictions in the capitalist world, in the present situation, led to the enormous intensification of the economic war between the two leading imperialist countries. The competitive struggle for imperialist hegemony was unleashed in the currency war between the Pound Sterling and the Dollar, one of the newest and most bitter forms of struggle for markets.

The Anglo-American struggle for power around the colonial and semi-colonial countries, for allies and vassals, is being intensified throughout the world. It led to the political trade wars on a large scale and to the advance of England for markets, with the aid of the depreciation of the pound, after Ottawa, to the most strenuous development of the British Trade Treaty System with a number of countries; on the other hand, to counter-attacks of America with its heaviest artillery of the economic war—the depreciation of the dollar. This embittered imperialist struggle for hegemony gave rise to a dull but constantly increasing struggle for influence in the British Dominions, in China, in India, in Africa, in South America, which at the moment is the most important field of struggle between British and American imperialism; it unleashed the local wars between Paraguay and Bolivia, between Colombia and Peru, and led to the present strengthening of British imperialist sovereignty over Argentina and an extension of influence in Brazil. The World Economic Conference in London in reality serves only as the arena and the instrument of carrying further the world imperialist conflict, which is conducted with all economic, financial and diplomatic means in the direction of the impending armed conflicts. The United States, the most powerful imperialism in the world from an economic point of view, is being driven to this by the shortage of colonies, and Great Britain, the declining world power, is being driven in the same direction by the pure impulse of self-preservation from the disintegrating social and national forces which are threatening the Empire.

Even though the direct military clash between England and America has not yet matured, the antagonism of these two leading imperialist powers, in the last analysis, decisively influences the

form of all the remaining capitalist contradictions and antagonisms. The Anglo-French rivalry for continental hegemony is being subordinated to it and in that way it to a great extent decides the outcome of the struggle around Versailles. The Anglo-American antagonism shapes, above all, the course of the American-Japanese war preparations, and also the course of the most bitter economic war between Japan and England itself which defends itself with the sharpest tariff weapons against the Japanese dumping which is throttling its Indian, African and Australian markets. The struggle between the United States and Great Britain likewise influences the trade and debt war between France and America as well as the struggle for the Mediterranean between France and Italy.

The imperialist war for the redistribution of the world has already been begun by Japanese imperialism a year and a half ago with its robber war in China by which it upset the imperialist distribution which existed since the first world war and thereby declared invalid the relation of power which in Washington, in 1922, it still recognized as binding. The all around struggle for the redistribution of the world among the imperialists has now already gone so far during the intensification of the crisis by means of kindling the most desperate forms of economic warfare (trade, customs, tariffs, and recently the currency war, for markets, sources of raw materials, fight on account of the war debts, strivings for autarchy, this struggle has itself so much increased the economic and social dissension of the capitalist world through these methods of the individual imperialist countries in seeking a way out of the difficulties, that now the formation of alliances for war has been pushed into the foreground of the whole international situation. The war alliances of the various imperialist groups against one another are being formed at a most rapid rate or they are already showing their strong outlines in the event of war, despite all the inner contradictions in the interweaving of the imperialist antagonisms. They are being formed around the chief breeding ground for war—in Europe of the Versailles System and on the Pacific Ocean.

In the war alliances which have practically already been established, even formally, they are now “working” merely for the creation of the necessary positions in which the war or the intervention can be first most advantageously kindled for them. The initiative for the most rapid bringing about of such a situation to correspond with its imperialist aims, has now especially been taken by British imperialism in the direction of anti-Soviet intervention: 1—By the most energetic support of Japan in changing over the war in China into a war of intervention against the Far East of the Soviet Union. 2—With the so-called Four-Power Pact to create a

position of affairs in Europe which will correspond to British interests in the same direction.

British imperialism not only wants to carve for itself some advantages out of the struggle which has been kindled around the Versailles System, in its capacity as arbitrator between France and Germany and its vassals, as well as between France and Italy, but also wants to assure its role as leader of the anti-Soviet war, wants to secure its position with regard to France which has to temporarily refrain from this position in consequence of the war-like forms which the revision question has assumed and also further wants to make sure of its position regarding America, its main enemy. That is why the Conservative Government in England, as the initiator of the Four-Power Pact for the "solution" of the contradictions arising out of the Versailles System, is attempting to organize its being carried over to the anti-Soviet war.

It is *at present* in the interests of British imperialism to prevent the Franco-German war and in the procedure of the "mutual discussion of all disputed questions" in the "compacts" made by England, France, Germany and Italy, after the awkwardness of MacDonald's disarmament maneuver, it wants to create for itself the necessary diplomatic instrument which it needs for its aims. By means of the procedure of "conferences and discussions" and "compacts", the French plans of sanctions (which today means war) against Germany are to be driven forward, or to be re-established in favor of the joint plans of intervention. England is afraid of the revolutionization of Europe as well as of the extension of French military hegemony. As against that, British imperialism is interested to a definite extent in the arming of Fascist Germany (MacDonald's "Disarmament Plan"), for the creation of a counter-weight for France and also, particularly, in order to assure for itself the lackey service of Germany during intervention. In this connection, England makes use of the foreign policy of Germany which together with Versailles has been all the more entrenched in the Four-Power Pact (especially also with the definite giving in of Italy with regard to France on account of the "Anschluss" danger on the part of Germany). In this way it can use Germany which has been fettered by the Four-Power Pact just as an instrument but by no means as an ally. Thus England also leaves the question of "compensation" for Germany in the East "open" until later, by accepting the alterations to the Four-Power Pact which exclude all the original ideas of revision.

In this way German fascism was compelled to sign the Four-Power Pact, to a "voluntary" abandonment of its claim for equal rights as a result of its outer political isolation. The fascist "powers-

that-be" in Germany at present see their entire salvation, in addition to staving off the French preventive measures, in practically enrolling themselves as lackeys in the anti-Soviet front in all independent imperialist instigation, in the most foolhardy and most crafty attempts to take the initiative in raking up anti-Soviet provocations also on its own part (the anti-Soviet crusade for colonial plunder which was openly declared in the Hugenberg memorandum at the World "Economic" Conference) and thereby sacrifice the real policy which in its time has broken through the isolation by Versailles.

French imperialism wants to use the "Four-Power Pact" first of all as a rapid procedure for the eventual carrying through of the "Sanctions". Through the Pact it further wants to claim definite support for itself from England but at the same time also in order to be able to press England to a certain extent by means of the Pact. Thus, for example, France is now playing with the attempt at a temporary understanding with Italy on the questions of the North Coast of Africa by means of leading Italian expansion to English spheres in Africa, by making use of the Anglo-Italian antagonism in Lybia, Abbysinia and in East Africa.

French imperialism, and especially its Polish vassal, must now do everything in their power in order to square up England's efforts for the Four-Power Pact to have a retarding effect upon the French anti-revisionist plans by increased war-like provocative activity against Germany. Otherwise, should the anti-Versailles powers gain, it would make the Pact into a success of the British government, into a diplomatic instrument for putting through the *British* war plans which would make the military intervention against the Soviet Union a reality, while temporarily pushing back the immediately threatening war conflicts among the imperialists in Europe at the present time. By this action England also wants to provoke the anti-Soviet war and have it under British leadership by its alliance with Japan in Eastern and Central Asia.

What the imperialists are endeavoring to do with the Four-Power Pact can be seen most clearly by the development of a situation which is directly preliminary to war. It means that decisive steps are being taken from every side to re-group the powers in such a way that would lead to war and intervention, to the favorable formation of a war or intervention situation. The Four-Power Pact also shows the acuteness of the situation preliminary to war inasmuch as the imperialists are today no longer satisfied only to use the League of Nations, and its "Disarmament" Conference, which is a many-sided instrument for preparing war, in order to adapt themselves to the feverish tempo of war preparation.

Even the sharpest weapon of the trade war, the currency

fight in which up to the present England has achieved a 25%, America an 18% and Japan a 60% depreciation of their currencies, no longer suffices for the imperialists in order to bring about any sort of decision with economic weapons and thus the World economic Conference in London could not even for a moment settle the rapidly shifting relations between the powers in the bitter trade and tariff war. The re-distribution of the world no longer only with economic, but also with military, weapons is now in the foreground of imperialist world policy. This is all the more so since in a number of countries which are the most weakened by the crisis, as particularly in Germany and Japan, even the most audacious fascist means of seeking for a way out of the crisis at the expense of the workers are no longer sufficient and they are now driving forward to a way out of the crisis at the expense of the other countries, to a way out by means of war.

The social side of the war preparations, which the fascists as well as the "democrats" are aspiring to with the corresponding "division of labor" between chauvinism and pacifism, is everywhere taking place parallel with the diplomatic, with the economic and military war preparations, but is particularly closely linked up with the simultaneous preparation for the civil war against the revolutionary proletariat. All the forms of preparing for war are now being rapidly completed in the individual countries, even at the risk of their not being perfected. The imperialists must all take the big risk of waging a war at present in view of the still greater necessity and the desperate drive for expansion, in the most explicit sense of Marx' words "at the penalty of going under". There is today the most intimate interweaving of the class struggle with the imperialist war and more especially with intervention. The revolutionary proletariat and its Communist vanguard, in view of this interweaving, must do everything in their power to obviate the war through the proletarian revolution. But in this interweaving of the class contradictions with the imperialist contradictions, they must also understand how to actively carry the imperialist war over into the civil war if the given perspective of the relation of class forces in the imperialist war or the intervention against the Soviet Union would permit the advance of the proletarian revolution.

Japan is today at the point of turning against the Soviet Union, after its occupation of North China. At present Japanese imperialism wants to postpone the war against America precisely for the purpose of being able to carry out its plans of intervention undisturbedly. In a *war alliance* with Japan, British imperialism is preparing for a mobilization against the Southern frontier of the Soviet Union, in China, Turkestan and Afghanistan, and wants to set up

the front for the main attack upon the Soviet Union as rapidly as possible. However, if England does not succeed in obviating the imperialist war which can today be unleashed at any moment around Versailles, in the Danzig Corridor, on the Rhine and the Danube, this temporary obstacle to intervention in the West, by putting through its plans for intervention, then British imperialism will not stop at the most audacious anti-Soviet provocations in order to work for the rapid conversion of this war into intervention.

## II. THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL AND THE WAR

The Second International of the pre-war period was split on its attitude to the war question. The collapse of the International was not only expressed in the organizational break-up but above all in the ideological bankruptcy, in the complete triumph of social-chauvinism. The international decisions which not only pledged the Executive of the International and its Sections to the struggle against war but also to actions during the war, became a worthless piece of paper at the decisive moment. In August, 1914, the Second International broke itself up into purely hostile divisions of the various armies. Under the slogan of the defence of the country, the leaders of the International—Vandervelde, Blum, Renaudel, Ebert, Scheidemann, Henderson—went over into the camp of the imperialist war-mongers, “placed themselves on the side of their general staffs, their governments and their bourgeoisie against the proletariat” (Lenin). Thus, as the leaders of the Second International supported the imperialist war from the standpoint of their bourgeoisie, they also gave their approval to the robber Treaty of Versailles, which imposed unbearable burdens upon the proletariat of the conquered countries, bore within itself the germ of a new war, and helped the bourgeoisie in the conquered countries to throttle the proletarian revolution in the blood of tens of thousands of revolutionary workers. *The same spirit of social chauvinism and social imperialism which led to the collapse of the pre-war International in August, 1914, also dominates the Second International which was founded again in Hamburg in 1923.* The founding of the International this time took place on the basis of a *big international deceptive maneuver*. Point 4 of the statutes of the Labor and Socialist International, which are a poor imitation of the statutes of the League of Nations, states the following:

“The L. S. I. is not only an instrument for the tasks during war but also an indispensable instrument during every war.”

The Second International, at the head of which there are the same men who during the imperialist world war had carried on the

business of the bourgeoisie of their countries and who as government ministers became prominent as the highest dignitaries of the imperialists, however, cannot even hold out during peace. *It is already in the process of a split even before the military advances of the imperialist powers have begun for a new imperialist world war.*

Internationalism has disappeared from its ranks. *Each* one of the Social-Democratic Parties fights in *its* own country, side by side with *its* bourgeoisie, and all of them together in the Second International fight against *Communism*. Fear of the proletarian revolution makes them become the main social support of the bourgeoisie in the struggle against the proletarian revolution.

The Social-Democratic parties administer the affairs of their *own* bourgeoisie in order to overcome the crisis of their *own* capitalism at the expense of the working class and the other toiling sections of the population in their *own* country.

In the various countries the Social-Democratic parties represent the interests of their *own imperialism* on the basis created by the robber Versailles Peace Treaty. They support the military armament of their own imperialism and at the same time they delude the working class about the menacing danger of a new imperialist war by pacifist phrases.

The Social-Democracy of every country is and remains the main social bulwark of their bourgeoisie in the struggle against the revolutionary proletariat, in their efforts to find the way out of the crisis through a new imperialist war.

The result of the *peace policy* of the *Social-Democratic parties with their bourgeoisie* is the triumph of fascism in Italy, Poland, Hungary and Germany, is the *international advance of the fascist reaction* with all the consequences that appear in its wake.

The result of the *International "Peace Policy"* of the Second International is the *immediate danger of a new imperialist world war*, particularly the *danger of military intervention against the Soviet Union*.

With their united forces the Social-Democratic parties supported the struggle against the common enemy of the world bourgeoisie, against the land of the proletarian dictatorship, against the Soviet Union. They are the spokesmen in the campaigns of incitement and slander against the Soviet Union ("red imperialism", "forced labor" and "Soviet dumping" baiting).

The Second International financed the criminal wrecking and sabotage work of the Mensheviks; it placed itself protectingly in the front of the agents of the Intelligence Service who are attempting to organize the counter-revolution in the Soviet Union.

The Second International proclaimed the *united front of the im-*

*perialist powers to prevent a new imperialist war and at the same time prepared the war of intervention against the Soviet Union to an increased extent* (provocation: Why does not the Red Army advance against Hitler? This was baiting on the occasion of concluding the so-called *Berlin Treaty* on the peace pact of Stalin and Hitler. The approval of the French social-democracy of the Mussolini-MacDonald Four-Power Pact, the aim of which is to merge the chief imperialist powers of Europe against the Soviet Union).

The *policy of the Second International of the post-war period signifies the permanent declaration of the policy of the 4th of August at a higher level*. German social-democracy not only acquiesced to Hitler's desire for war with the "song of Deutschland" on its lips, but it also supported the fascist dictatorship in "making the German youth prepared for war" through its active cooperation in putting through the labor service and the policy of "reclaiming the youth".

Thus, just as the path of the pre-war International led straight from opportunism to social-chauvinism and social-imperialism, the path of the newly founded Second International led from social-imperialism to social-fascism. In all decisive questions the leaders of the social-democracy and of the Amsterdam trade unions have not only become the active supporters and champions of imperialism, but *have become those who prepare the way for militant fascism*.

The Second International and all its sections, which in 1918 by deception and by force prevented the proletariat from converting the imperialist war into a civil war for the overthrow of capitalism and in that way making it the last imperialist war, have actually prepared the new imperialist war by unleashing the fascist civil war against the disarmed proletariat. *With that the Second International fulfilled its historic mission in the post-war period*.

### III. FASCISM AND WAR

Fascism takes the most active part in the preparation of the new imperialist war and the armed intervention against the U.S.S.R., as organizer, as propagandist and as supplier of armed forces.

Organization of the counter-revolution, the fight against the Communist movement, guaranteeing of "peace" in the hinterland of the bourgeois states which are arming for war and intervention—these are the tasks which fascism has first and foremost set for itself.

In his speech of July 13, 1928, Comrade Stalin stated the following: "Still, pacifism alone does not suffice in order to prepare for new wars even when it is being supported by such a contemptible force as the social-democracy. For this purpose it is also necessary to have other means besides that in order to keep the masses down

in the centers of imperialism. One cannot carry on a war for the imperialists without securing the imperialist hinterland. The hinterland, however, cannot be secured without keeping down the workers. And fascism serves exactly this purpose."

In closest connection with this there is the work which fascism is developing in all capitalist countries for the ideological preparation of the population, in the first place the petty-bourgeois masses, for the new war. The fascist organizations are the Agit-prop department of imperialism to carry on chauvinistic, nationalistic and anti-semitic agitation as well as for the militarization of the minds of the broadest masses of their country. The methods of agitation and propaganda of Hitler fascism in Germany are a striking example of how, under the cloak of agitation for the "third Empire", for the "re-establishment of the former power of German imperialism", for the "revision of the Versailles Treaty", planned, conscious preparation of the population for a new war is carried on.

Hitler, Goebbels, Rosenberg and all other "leaders" of German national-socialism are daily drilling into the minds of the petty-bourgeoisie, the intellectuals, the unemployed artisans and the student youth that the way out of their difficult position can only be found along the path of "national self-defense". But what this "national self-defense" really is was formulated by Hitler with sufficient frankness in one of his speeches when he declared the following: *"No sacrifice would be too great for us, no war would be too bloody for us, for Germany must live!"*

Fascism is creating cadres of the bourgeoisie for the civil war, it is seeking to make sure of reliable cadres of the bourgeois armies for the coming war through the formation of voluntary fascist military organizations. It creates military, semi-military, patriotic, religious, sport and other organizations which embrace considerable sections of the population through military education. The Ku Klux Klan in America, the Storm Detachments, the "Stahlhelm", the "Hungdo", etc., in Germany, the "Strelitz" in Poland, the "Schutzkorps" in Finland, the "Voinitsch" in Rumania, the "Komitatschi" in Jugo-Slavia, the "Absardzi" in Latvia, etc., etc.,—all these are organizations of fascist cadres which at present, on the one hand, form dependable cadres within the bourgeois armies and on the other hand, are to secure peace in the bourgeois hinterland.

Finally, fascism which is already at the helm is a particularly energetic and tenacious organizer of new wars and interventions. It defends the interests of its own imperialism, represents the interests of the most extreme military parties of the bourgeoisie, it intensifies the antagonisms between the capitalist powers and there-

fore the foreign policy of the fascist state is a policy of direct preparation for war.

The policy of German fascism, which has placed the question of the revision of the Versailles treaty at the head of its foreign policy, is a policy of conscious preparation of a new world war, of a new armed intervention. In this connection, however, it is to be noted that the famous bourgeois democrats who prate so loudly about the war which the fascist state is preparing, arm themselves for war no less consistently and energetically than the fascists do.

#### IV. THE TASKS IN COMBATTING THE PREPARATIONS FOR IMPERIALIST WAR AND MILITARY INTERVENTION

The present pre-war situation demands the greatest possible vigilance from the Communist Parties and rapid reaction to the various features of the imperialist war—the mobilization of the proletarian and the toiling masses for action against their own bourgeoisie which is preparing for war, against their fascist and “democratic” dictators, against the chauvinist deception and terrorization by war-inciting fascism, against the democratic pacifist and national mass deception by the war-mongers and their social-democratic vassals, against the enslavement by the treaties of Versailles, Saint Germain, Trianon, complete equal rights of the nations and their right to free self-determination,—*Against War and Intervention; For the Defense of the Soviet Union; For Obtaining the Proletarian Dictatorship*, which alone can assure the peaceful cooperation of all nations through the realization of Socialism.

#### V. THE TASKS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY U. S. A.

1. In view of the fact that the Party committed a number of serious errors on the war question, it becomes necessary for the American Party to establish political clarity within the Party organizations, the press and amongst the working class in general on the Communist position on the war question as the necessary precondition for effective and successful struggle against war. In line with this task, the Party must make full use of the criticism made by the Twelfth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. on the mistakes of the American Party on the war question.

2. The sharpening of the antagonisms between the imperialist powers, especially between the U. S. A. and England, has demonstrated by the failure of the Disarmament Conference, the sharp differences at the World Economic Conference, the war between the pound and the dollar, the struggle around the war debts and the

wars in South America, and has made it imperative for the Communist Party to organize the mass struggle against the coming war, to explain in the most simple terms to the masses the meaning of the various peace, economic and disarmament conferences, to organize actions of solidarity with the British workers, to hamper the shipments of munitions to South America and strengthen its ties with and give assistance to the revolutionary workers' and peasants' movements in Latin-American countries.

3. The imperialist intervention plans against the Soviet Union have already matured into concrete actions against the U.S.S.R. This was evident by the trial of the engineers of Metro-Vickers, the British embargo, the Four-Power Pact, the Nazi atrocities against the representatives of the Soviet Government in Germany and the imperialist Japanese aggression in the Far East. The struggle against the intervention plans of their own bourgeoisie is the first duty of the American working class. To be able to do this, the Communist Party must combat the illusions created by the peace maneuvers and demagogy of the Roosevelt government, that with its coming to power the United States gave up its imperialist war aims against the Soviet Union. The success of Socialist industry and agriculture, the rising living standards and higher cultural levels attained by the Soviet masses must be still more popularized to increase the already existing sympathies for the Soviet Union amongst masses of American workers, farmers and intellectuals. These sympathies the Party must transform into concerted actions for the immediate and unconditional recognition of the Soviet Union and its defense from imperialist attacks. The Party must expose the role of American imperialism in the Far East which for its own imperialist interests is posing as a "friend" of the Chinese people against Japan, supporting the Nanking Government and thereby becoming the backbone of the military drive to crush the Chinese Soviets. The Party must conduct a relentless campaign against the home policy of American imperialism, which again for its own imperialist interests utilizes the atrocities of Japanese imperialism in China to develop a war spirit against Japan in the U. S. A., particularly amongst the youth. As in the last war U. S. imperialism will once more resort to its war slogan of "saving the world for democracy"—protecting the Chinese people from Japanese aggression in order to extend its own imperialist domination in the Far East. The Party must demand the stopping of shipments of munitions to the Far East and the immediate withdrawal of all American troops and battleships from China and from all other foreign lands and colonies where American forces are stationed.

4. To create a mass basis in the struggle against war, it is necessary to connect the daily economic struggles of the workers with the struggle against war. For this purpose the Party must place in the center the struggle against the Roosevelt war and hunger program. The Roosevelt Government in order to get mass support and in order to utilize the millions of unemployed for its imperialist war preparations, tries under the pretext of helping the unemployed to militarize hundreds of thousands of young and adult unemployed in the reforestation and concentration camps. Under the guise of public works as a means of unemployment relief the Roosevelt Government will build new battleships and other war armaments, utilizing the unemployed millions, and lower still further the living standards of the American workers. The Roosevelt government is using the war debts question to whip up national chauvinism and war spirit. The farmers are being told that they must oppose any cancellation of the war debts, that they must be ready to defend by all means the efforts of the Roosevelt government to collect the war debts in order to lighten their own tax burdens. The Party must popularize and explain the slogan of cancellation of war debts accompanied by the demand for cancellation of all debts of the poor and middle farmers. Never before were the national economic policies of the American bourgeoisie, high tariffs, inflation, etc., so closely linked with its foreign policy of imperialist war and rivalry. The Roosevelt Recovery Act embodies the war and hunger program of the American bourgeoisie. It is the capitalist answer to the rapidly growing movement for federal unemployment insurance, and it becomes the duty of the Party to cement the ever-growing unity of the American workers in the struggle against this Recovery Act and to organize a still broader campaign for federal unemployment insurance.

5. The demands for immediate full cash payment of the bonus, the resistance to reductions of disability allowances, remain the central rallying demands of the millions of American war veterans. The struggle around these demands, the experience of the war veterans in the last war, are in themselves a powerful anti-war factor. The Party must, of course, give leadership to this struggle, but the Party must also help the veterans to draw the proper political conclusions from their struggle. We must take advantage of the facts disclosed in the recent Senate investigation of the House of Morgan, showing the government, both Republican and Democratic, as the paid servants and the executor of the imperialist war plans of the American ruling class.

6. The Party must take note of the anti-war sentiments already existing among the masses, which the Socialist Party

and the reactionary pacifist organizations are trying to utilize as a cover for the imperialist war preparations of the American bourgeoisie. We must have in mind the special brand of American pacifism fostered by the American democracy which the bourgeoisie utilizes to advance its imperialist war plans. More than ever must the Party relentlessly expose the Socialist Party based upon its international role as the organizer of imperialist interventions, as the defender and promoter of big armies and navies, as well as the role of the American Socialist Party at home. It is the duty of the Party on the basis of its own clear Communist slogans closely tied with the struggle for the every-day interests of the masses not only to lead every anti-war movement, but also to crystallize and unite under the hegemony of the proletariat every movement of resistance to war and militarism. The existing anti-war committees organized in connection with the Amsterdam Congress must be made to develop more activity. These anti-war committees and especially our preparations for the coming American Anti-War Congress, must be made rallying centers for mass organizations, trade unions, fraternal and cultural organizations. In the preparations for this Anti-War Congress, which must be an important mass action in our general anti-war campaign, the Party must develop the broadest united front with special emphasis upon the task of involving the masses, particularly workers of reformist and reactionary-controlled organizations.

To involve still broader masses in the struggle against war and for the defense of the Soviet Union, the Party must explain the recent strikebreaking activities of the National Guards against the farmers in the States of Wisconsin and Iowa. These recent experiences of the farmers, if properly utilized by our Party, and its organizations in the farming regions, will broaden our united front, our anti-war movement, and involve those strata of the population whom the bourgeoisie considered an almost inexhaustible source of man-power and support for their imperialist wars.

7. The center where these central tasks outlined above are to be carried out must be the factories, particularly the war industries. To do this, however, the Party must make an inner turn, it must really explain, based upon the last Central Committee letter, precisely why the anti-war struggle must now be based on the factories and trade unions. Only if our anti-war campaign is developed in the factories, munition plants, docks and ships can our struggle against war be effective. Only by such means can we actually paralyze the war plans of the American bourgeoisie; only in this way can the Soviet Union be defended from American imperialist intervention. The factories, the places of heavy industry, will be

the necessary guarantees that it will be the proletariat that will lead, which is the only class capable to lead the anti-war movements of all non-proletarian stratas of the population. The next strategic places for the anti-war activities of the Party and the Y.C.L. must be within the armed forces, as well as within the various semi-military reforestation and concentration camps of adult unemployed and homeless youth.

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# From Opportunism to Counter-Revolution

By V. J. JEROME

(Article II of the series begun in the August Issue.)

DARK and devious are the ways of revisionism. Lacking by the nature of their role the freedom of the open opponents of Marxism, the revisionists, boring with bourgeois hands from within the proletariat, are compelled to resort to every manner of subterfuge, to evasion and forgetfulness, to sophism and half-truth, to suppression, distortion—even to forgery, in their subtle attempts to un-Marx Marx. Thus, a favorite practice with them—and Kautsky sets the tone—is to speak of two Marxisms, or, if you will, two Marxes—a younger and an older; a primitive, youthful, storm-and-stress Marxism belonging to the fierce barricade days of 1848, and a sobered, bearded, parliamentarized Marxism of the century grown older, looking back with the forbearance of age at the escapades of youth.

Marx contra Marx. The staid *Das Kapital* versus the fiery *Communist Manifesto*. What more can be desired in proof that the Marxian teachings do not constitute a unified system of established principles?

Let us see how Kautsky develops his thesis:

“We see, then, that in 1850 Marx had risen above the socialist comrades of his day (they called themselves Communists then), those who dreamed that the working class would soon take over full power in society. Nevertheless, Marx had not yet completely rid himself of his Jacobin-Blanquist ideas. He still saw in armed uprisings, in ‘civil wars and peoples’ struggles’ a means of raising the working class to a higher cultural level. He did not yet perceive that every sanguinary war, an armed uprising of the people included, however it may at the outset inspire the people and elevate them morally, must in the end exert a corrupting influence on those who participate in it. Such an armed struggle will not develop, but will reduce, the capacity of the workers, not only for their work, but also for their political activity.” (*Forward*, March 26, 1933.)

Having set up to his own satisfaction two Marxes that stand in contradiction to each other, Kautsky essays to prove that a cer-

tain group of Socialists today have taken over the heritage of Marx the Younger, "the sectarian, conspirative tendencies which Marx displayed in the first years, and which were reminiscent of the French revolutionary, Blanqui". And he goes on to say:

"Such socialists believe to this day that a small group of revolutionists can enter into a conspiracy, call forth an uprising, and introduce the socialist order through violence. They think it therefore possible to introduce socialism in countries that are backward in industrial and cultural development." (*Forward*, March 19, 1933.)

As to who these Socialists are, Kautsky enlightens us:

"We can easily imagine what Engels would say, were he living today and witnessing what the Bolsheviks, who consider themselves Marxists, have made of Marxism in Russia." (Cited place.)

Let us examine Kautsky's (really Bernstein's) theory of the two Marxes.

To begin with, let us see what are the principal features of the revolutionary tactics known as Blanquism. The term, it should be remembered, is of bourgeois coinage, having been applied first by the French capitalists, ostensibly in opprobrium but virtually in fear, to the revolutionary socialist movement that had come to be led since the '30's by Auguste Blanqui, "the eternal prisoner", as against the opportunist, reformist policy of that ideological forebear of latter-day class-collaborationist social democracy—Louis Blanc. Historically Blanquism was a resumption, one cannot say a development, of Babeuvism, the unsuccessful conspirative insurrectionary movement led by Babeuf and Buonarroti as the last revolutionary episode in the great French Revolution. Babeuf's conspiracy, appearing to be the swan song of the bourgeois revolution, was in reality the birth-cry of the proletarian uprisings to follow. At the very hour of Thermidor, when the newly established bourgeois constitutionalism was abolished, there penetrated, in the Babeuvist Conspiracy of the Equals, the first organized manifestation of the revolutionary will of the nascent proletariat.

It would, however, be the gravest error to attribute to Babeuvism the theory of scientific Communism. It emerged at a time when the proletariat was beginning, in the course of its first open conflicts with the enemy, to crystallize itself as a class independent in interests and outlook from the bourgeois-led Third Estate in which it had till then been a component part. The vanguard of the Equals was, therefore, by its historic conditionings still a party, not of the

proletariat, but *for* the proletariat. This was in all essentials as true of the later Babeuvists, the followers of Blanqui who developed their organization into an active, well-disciplined revolutionary party. The Blanquists shared many of the traits of the Utopian Socialists against whose class pacifism they waged bitter warfare. Notwithstanding their materialist philosophy, their keen class consciousness, the Blanquists, like the St. Simonists and the Fourierists, stressed the perfectionalist theory of the primacy and omnipotence of education, as when Blanqui declared in his work, *Communism—the Future Society*:

“Communism must inevitably come as the result of universal education; it cannot come otherwise.”

The sheer *a priori* nature here given to education reflects an attitude of paternalism toward the working class on the part of a vanguard that has not yet acquired full faith in the developing self-liberating role of the proletariat which must in the course of its heightening struggles fashion its class theory, its education, as its world outlook and weapon.

This Utopian trait is visible, too, in their sectarian conception of the relation of Party to class. Although the Blanquists put forward against the reformist cooperativism of the Proudhonists and the bourgeois ministerialism of Louis Blanc the political objective of the revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the seizure of State power, they did not in their program involve the mass action of the proletariat, but aspired instead to bring about the revolution in behalf of the proletariat by the sudden insurrectionary act of their disciplined illegal party. Hence, the dictatorship which they sought to set up upon the seizure of power would of necessity be, not the rule of the entire proletariat, but of the small minority of the “men of action”, the professional revolutionists who had organized and made the revolution.

In keeping with their idealistic over-emphasis on the subjective role of the revolutionists, was their failure to relate revolution to revolutionary situation, was their infantile impatience with intermediate stages, their scorn for developing the revolutionary movement through the struggle for partial demands. As a group of later Blanquists proclaimed in their manifesto:

“We are Communists, because we want to reach our goal without stopping at any intermediate stations, at compromises, which merely defer the victory and prolong the slavery.”

But the clear proletarian essence of Blanquism; its powerful

emphasis on the role of the proletarian party, notwithstanding the utopism that swathed its concept of the party; its view of Socialism, not as a dream to aspire to, but as a real, necessary social system, indispensable, to be fought for in an organized armed uprising that must lead to the wresting of political power from the exploiters—such a perspective advanced that movement beyond the vague socialism of the Great Utopists, brought it closer by far to the revolutionary, scientific Socialism of Marx and Engels.

It was his recognition of the historic significance of the Conspiracy of the Equals, headed by Babeuf in 1796, which caused Marx, in writing of that even to Karl Heinzen fifty years later, to speak of it as “the first appearance of a really effective Communist party”, despite the fact that in polemizing against Stirner, he said:

“To take Babeuf as the theoretical exponent of communism could only have entered the head of a Berlin schoolmaster.”

It was because he recognized that in the revolution of 1848 the Blanquists alone championed the socialist aspirations of the proletariat, that Marx, in *The Class Struggles in France*, after characterizing the socialism of Louis Blanc as utopian and doctrinaire, as a program that seeks to evade the revolutionary class struggle, states of Blanquism that “the proletariat rallies increasingly around revolutionary socialism, around communism, for which the bourgeoisie itself has invented the name Blanqui”.

And Marx goes on to say:

“This socialism is the declaration of the revolution in permanence, of the class dictatorship of the proletariat as a necessary step towards the abolition of class distinctions in general...”

We see from this what it is that Marx extracted from Blanquism—not its sectarianism, not its conspirativeness, not its putschism, as Kautsky would have us believe, but the theory present in it, though still in rudimentary form, of the revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist order and of the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship.

It was this fundamentally revolutionary nature of Blanquism that made it possible for Marx and Engels, together with the Communists August Willich and Julian Harney, to sign with the Blanquists, Vidil and Adam, the articles of association of “The World League of Revolutionary Communists”, the first clause of which reads:

"The aim of the League is the overthrow of all privileged classes, the subjection of these classes to the dictatorship of the proletariat through maintaining the revolution in permanence till the realization of Communism, which is to be the ultimate form of organization of the human community."

Earlier yet, in 1847, in the Rules and Constitution of the Communist League, we find the expressed aim to be "the establishment of the rule of the proletariat". In the *Communist Manifesto*, which was published the following year, we find the formulation: "the first step in the workers' revolution is to make the proletariat the ruling class". In another passage of the *Manifesto* we read: "Since the proletariat must first of all win political power, must make itself the ruling class..." It was not, however, until after the defeat of the Parisian proletariat in the "June days" of 1848 and the lessons drawn from those historic experiences, that Marx employed the term "dictatorship of the proletariat".

Kautsky's charge of Blanquism is manifestly directed at the Marxian teachings on the State and revolution, the principles of the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism and of the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat as a period of transition to the classless society. He speaks of Marx, the author of *Class Struggles in France*, of the *Address to the Communist League*, of the *Communist Manifesto*, as not having perceived yet (in 1850) that every armed mass uprising "must in the end exert a corrupting influence on those who participate in it", thereby leaving the assumption that Marx eventually came to such a conclusion. But surely Kautsky knows that a quarter of a century after the publication of the *Communist Manifesto*, Marx and Engels jointly declared:

"Though conditions may have changed in the course of the twenty-five years since the *Manifesto* was written, yet the general principles expounded in the document are on the whole as correct today as ever."

Indeed, what modification they did introduce was, far from being in the nature of repudiation, a further development of the Marxian theory of the State as it is contained in the *Manifesto*. The experiences of the Paris Commune had demonstrated that "the working class cannot simply lay hold on the ready-made State machinery, and wield it for its own purposes". From the defeat of the Communards, Marx and Engels wrung the lesson that the dictatorship of the proletariat, the distinct form of the State of the working class in power, cannot rise into being save through the

*destruction*, the utter shattering, of the bourgeois State apparatus. (How youthful, Herr Kautsky, Marx remained, after all!)

And is not the theory of the obsolescence of the *Communist Manifesto* further refuted in so telling a document as Engels's letter to Van Patten written in the year of Marx' death? What can be more devastating to the theory of the two Marxes than the following passage:

"At the same time we [Marx and I] always considered that, in order to attain this, as well as other far more important aims of the coming social revolution, the proletariat will, from the beginning, have to seize into its hands organized political state power and with its help smash the resistance of the capitalist class and reorganize society. *This is all explained in the Communist Manifesto of 1847, at the end of the second chapter.*" (Italics mine—V.J.J.)

And what, indeed, is the *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, written in 1875, but Marx' struggle against the opportunists in the German party for the defense of the basic principles embodied in the *Communist Manifesto*? Does not Marx throughout the *Critique* point out the party's Lassalleian deviations from the *Manifesto*, by juxtaposing in proof parallel passages from the *Gotha Programme* and the *Manifesto* on the various points at issue?

It is in this work that the elderly Marx, twenty-seven years removed from those stormy "June days" of 1848, reaffirmed with emphasis the principle which we have seen permeating his earlier writings—the teaching on the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.

What answer can Kautsky give to this decisive refutation of his theory of duplex Marxism? He gives the answer of the evader, the concealer, the falsifier. In blissful forgetfulness of everything Marx and Engels had written, of everything they had struggled for, organized for, built for, this claimant to the custodianship of their theoretical system, declares in his *Materialist Conception of History* in the course of his attack upon the Bolsheviks:

"They refer to the words 'Dictatorship of the Proletariat', which Marx expressed once, but only incidentally."

What is this but the effort of an ideological trickster to wriggle out of a dilemma? For none but a deep-grained anti-Marxist aiming to promote bourgeois ideology under a Marxian guise would deliberately attempt to conceal the numerous positive doctrinal affirmations of the dictatorship of the proletariat which are the very tissue of the writings of Marx from the '40's to the end of his

days. None but such would brazenly characterize as purely incidental, as a mishap, a slip of the pen, so to speak, the teaching which, in the well-known letter to Weydemeyer, Marx declared to be the core of his contribution.

"What I did", said Marx in that letter, "was to prove the following: 1) That the existence of classes is connected only with certain historical struggles which are characteristic of the development of production. 2) That class war inevitably leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat. 3) That this dictatorship is only a transition to the destruction of any classes and to society without classes."

As was pointed out in the first part of this article,\* Marx' immediate purpose in stating in the *Critique* the position of revolutionary socialism on the dictatorship of the proletariat was to demolish the entire democratic section of the *Gotha Programme*, the litany of "political demands", which insofar as socialism is concerned, are not a step beyond the typical bourgeois democracy in the advanced countries of Europe and America, as Marx justly comments.

Kautsky set himself at the outset against the *Critique*. In the true manner of a Centrist that he then was, he temporised for years in the effort to block its publication. Subsequent to the publication, which had been forced upon him by Engels, he used the columns of the *Neue Zeit* to weaken Marx' criticism of the Lassallean streak that runs through the *Gotha Programme*. Thus, in 1891, he wrote the sickening hypocrisy:

"The attitude taken by Marx toward Lassalle differs from that of the German Social Democracy... We read attentively and ponder over all that Marx says of his pupil Lassalle, but we do not forget that Lassalle, too, was one of our teachers and foremost fighters."

Since then Kautsky has consistently sought to excise the principle of the dictatorship of the proletariat from the *Critique of the Gotha Programme* to offset Marx' attack upon the illusions of bourgeois democracy that pervade the *Programme*. Kautsky's sin of omission has its counterpart in his sin of commission. Against his attempt to omit from the *Critique* the passage on the dictatorship of the proletariat by denying it organic relationship, Kautsky matches his notorious parody on the Marxian passage in question.

It will be necessary here to repeat Marx' statement:

"Between the capitalist and the Communist society lies a period of the revolutionary transformation from one to the other. To this there also corresponds a political transition period during which the

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\* *The Communist*, August, 1933.

State can be nothing else than the *revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.*" (Marx' italics.)

In 1922, in *The Proletarian Revolution and its Programme*, Kautsky thus presumes to "correct" Marx:

"In the interval between the purely bourgeois administration and the purely proletarian administration of a democratic State there is the period of transition from one into the other. To this also corresponds a political transition period, when the Government, **as a rule**, takes the form of a coalition government."

It requires but one more quotation to complete the picture. It is a quotation from Kautsky—the concluding words of his pamphlet, *The High Cost of Living*, published shortly before the World War. The passage reads:

"So we may confidently enter upon the conflict which the new era of capitalism has for us, in which no rapid addition to gold production can longer interfere with the sharpening of class antagonisms, in which capital extends its domain only at the expense of the growing misery of the mass of the population, and the latter is more and more compelled to cause the overthrow of the capitalist system on pain of its own destruction."

One felt tempted to quote this passage—not to cite Kautsky against Kautsky, but to confront Kautsky the Younger with Kautsky the Older, Kautsky the one-time Marxist with Kautsky the now degenerated anti-Marxist.

Kautsky has "corrected" Marx.

*"In the interval between the purely bourgeois administration and the purely proletarian administration of a democratic State. . . ." (!)*

We look in vain for a vestige of the Marxian theory of the State. Where is the teaching on the political superstructure which Marx enunciates in the Preface to the *Critique of Political Economy*, in the *Poverty of Philosophy*, in the *Communist Manifesto*? Where are the specific "legal and political forms of social consciousness" rising over a specific economic structure of society? Where, indeed, is the State Engels speaks of—the State that "by force of its economic supremacy becomes also the ruling political class. . . ."?

We see only a "democratic State" as a basic immutable political structure which may be, now under bourgeois, now under proletarian, administration. The "democratic State" must no longer be viewed as an open organ peculiarly adapted in structure and function to serve the capitalist class in its exploitation of the proletariat; it has become the organ of all society. Consequently, in

relation to the State there are no classes! Ergo, there can be no talk of seizing the bourgeois State power, and less of destroying it. Solved, then, is the problem of revolutionary overthrow, of establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat. The political transition period Marx speaks of has been greatly simplified. In the hands of Kautsky it takes the form of a bourgeois coalition government!

*(To be concluded)*

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### ERRATA

Due to a typographical error in the August issue of *The Communist*, the first paragraph of the article "From Opportunism to Counter-Revolution" by V. J. Jerome (page 824), appeared incorrectly. It should read:

"Often we hear the question asked: Can it be that one-time revolutionaries, former scholars and tacticians of scientific socialism, should so utterly have forgotten their Marxian fundamentals as to have become ideologically bankrupt?"

On page 831, line 37, the last words should read: "the interpenetration of".

# Organizational Problems in the Light of the Open Letter

By J. PETERS

THE Open Letter of the Extraordinary Party Conference raises very sharply the problem of building the Party into a revolutionary party of the proletariat. It states that "in spite of the spread of the mass movements and, above all, in spite of the radicalization of the masses of workers, the Party has not developed into a revolutionary mass party of the proletariat." While the political influence of the Party is steadily increasing, and a considerable number of workers are joining the Party, the actual growth continues at an extremely slow pace. Thousands of non-Party workers have participated in the leadership of strikes and in the struggles of the unemployed, and are carrying on active work in the unions, mass organizations and united front committees. Large numbers of these workers are ripe for the Party, standing on the very threshold, and, with little effort, can be drawn in. And since our Party is not fully conscious, during the day-to-day struggles of the necessity of recruiting these already revolutionized workers, numbers of them seeking an outlet for their political activity, are drawn into the Socialist Party. In those sections where the Communist Party is very weak and does not sufficiently expose the Socialist Party, that party is still in a position to carry out its historic role. Upon the mass activity and recruiting of the Communist Party depends to what extent the Socialist Party will play its part in stemming the tide of the revolutionary upsurge.

The influx of new elements into our Party during the past few years emphasizes the powerful attraction of the Party to the large masses of toilers. More than 35,000 workers joined the Party in the last three years. During the past six months, our Party recruited 8,300 members. These workers joined as a result of the general activity of the Party, rather than through any special effort on the part of the Party membership. In proof of the above facts let us compare the figures of the last recruiting campaign (1932) with the recruiting during the first six months of this year.

During the 1932 three-month recruiting campaign, 6,300 workers were admitted to the Party, with a monthly average of 2,700 in the last two months of that period.

In the past six months of this year, the Party has had no special campaign. Although it has led many successful strikes and struggles, the recruiting has reached only half the monthly average as compared with the 1932 campaign. Our Party has not yet fully attained the realization that the daily recruiting of the best elements in struggles and activities is of vital importance.

As a crass example we can cite the Furriers Union. Under the leadership of the Party, after a victorious struggle, the Furriers Union has established itself as the only union in the industry, wiping out the reformist union and organizing 10,000 workers into its ranks. Yet, today, after more than one year's existence, the Party fraction numbers only 100!

The ability to recruit at such time when the attention of the membership is directed toward mass recruiting as a campaign, clearly illustrates the mass attraction of our Party and the large reserves surrounding the Party from which we can draw. Tens of thousands of workers, many close sympathizers, are organized in the revolutionary unions, A. F. of L. and other mass organizations. Over 150,000 workers read the Party press and are influenced by the Party agitation. A large percentage of these workers are potential Party members. The fractions in these mass organizations are not conscious of this vast reserve from which the Party membership can be greatly increased.

In going over the figures of new recruits of 1933, it is seen that only a very insignificant number were recruited from those workers involved in strikes and struggles (Detroit auto strike, Pennsylvania miners' strike, shoe and textile, metal strikes, etc.), with the bulk of the workers coming from the ranks of the unemployed.

In the Detroit strike, led by the revolutionary union, we did not pay sufficient attention to recruiting into the Party and to building and strengthening the factory nuclei. In the April strikes in Pittsburgh District, only a negligible number were drawn into the Party.

The same holds true in most of the struggles during this period, with the exception of the St. Louis nut-pickers' strike, where, through the conscious effort of the section leadership of the Party, they succeeded in building a Party nucleus in almost every department of the factories, as well as in building the Y.C.L. The Party in St. Louis, in contrast to the other districts, knew how to bring forward boldly and emphasize the role of the Party in the course of the strike. The union organizer, a well-known Communist

who never hid the fact that he was a Communist, continuously kept his eyes open for possible Party members.

Not underestimating the necessity of recruiting at all times and through all activities, the main attention of the Party must be riveted upon recruiting from decisive basic industries.

At the Fourteenth Plenum the Party set itself, among others, the following tasks: The organization of a firm basis for our Party among the decisive strata of American workers in the most important industrial centers. The Party pledged at this plenum to "overcome the isolation of the Party from the decisive masses of the American workers, to come before the masses as their vanguard in the struggle against the offensive of the bourgeoisie and against the imperialist war and to firmly root itself in the decisive industry by means of solid personal contact with the workers."

The above examples show that the Party did not fully understand this central task. The existing shop nuclei in the basic industry did not grow. Ninety percent of those who joined the Party were unemployed, and a very small percentage of the employed workers came through direct activity in and around the factory. An analysis of the membership composition shows that only 3 percent are steel workers, a little above 5 percent miners, not quite 3 percent automobile workers, only 1 percent marine workers, 1.3 percent railroad workers, .3 percent chemical workers.

Only 28 percent of the employed members, or 7 percent of the total membership of the Party, are working in mines or factories employing 500 or more workers.

The Open Letter very sharply states:

"It is idle chatter to talk about the revolutionizing of the working class by the Party unless the Party conquers a firm base for itself among the miners, metal, steel workers, auto, marine and textile workers... it is nothing but phrase-mongering to talk about the building of the Party and the revolutionary trade unions without doing this among the important bodies of workers, in the big factories, in the important industrial sections."

At the Extraordinary Party Conference, the task was set to root the Party in the decisive elements of the working class in the basic industries. Emphasis was again placed on the necessity of concentration and the Conference concretely laid down the plan for the next period. The five concentration districts, Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, and New York, were assigned the special task of concentrating on altogether about 50 factories in the steel, mining, marine and automobile industries, besides those specific industries and problems which the districts have (stockyard,

Negro territory, etc). In these selected plants and sections, the task of the Party is to mobilize the workers for the struggle on wages, improvement of conditions, unemployment insurance, etc., through the energetic, thorough work of agitation, propaganda and organization through the utilization of all available forces and weapons for concentration and struggle. A definite break with the past methods of allowing ourselves to be driven by the course of events is the prerequisite for the assured carrying out of concentration.

"It goes without saying that it is our task to place ourselves at the head of every movement which breaks out spontaneously in the country, and to lead such movements, or where the reformist leaders stand at the head of a movement, to work for the building of fighting organs of the masses independent of the bureaucrats, in order to aid the masses in the exposure and replacement of the reformist leaders.

*"But unless we tenaciously concentrate our work on the most important industrial centers, we cannot build up a stable Party and revolutionary trade union movement, capable of resisting all blows and persecutions by the bourgeoisie."*—Open Letter (Our emphasis.)

The primary task of the whole Party is the building of a strong proletarian base in the big enterprises in these main industrial centers of the country. In order to carry out this primary task, all members of the Party, every leading committee, unit, section, district, and the center, must criticize in the most analytical manner its past activity and approach toward this vital problem. In the process of the preparation for the fulfillment of this basic task, many difficulties will be raised as a justification for our failure to build the Party and revolutionary unions in the large factories. We have to fight all these expressions which hinder our concentration work. The utmost care in the selection of forces, thorough discussion of the situations in the factories and methods of approach to the workers; the most detailed, daily attention and guidance from the higher committees, coordination between union fractions, Party committees and shop nuclei, the fullest utilization of the *Daily Worker* and the language papers, the mobilization of mass organizations, are essentials for the penetration of the selected factories. In connection with the selection of the leadership for the concentration points, the Open Letter states:

"Every Party member and especially every Party functionary must be a real organizer of mass struggles in his particular sphere of work. From this standpoint, the Party must judge the activity of its functionaries and must chose its leading bodies."

The Extraordinary Party Conference set the following control tasks:

1. To establish active Party units, drawing in the most advanced workers through personal work with them.
2. To build real mass trade union groups with functioning Party fractions in the sections.
3. To issue popular factory papers, or, for the beginning, factory bulletins.
4. To develop united front action, win the social-reformist workers and expose and fight reformism and social-fascist leaders.
5. To develop strong corps of proletarian cadres, experienced in mass work, and establish collective leadership of sections and tried secretaries in units, establish around the lower committees of the Party broad, active cadres which must be constantly instructed and utilized for the effective mobilization of the Party membership and for mass work; to draw active workers, members of the Party, from the factories into the leadership of the section committees.

The fact that in only a few of the concentration points have we shop nuclei, and where shop nuclei do exist they do not function because of lack of guidance from the higher committees, and in many of the selected concentration points we have only contacts and no organization, brings very sharply to the forefront the necessity of recruiting directly from these factories, and building the shop nuclei, the firm base for all our activities in the shop. The Party has some sad experiences in neglecting the building of the Party in the factories. In the Detroit automobile strike, in one factory where we succeeded in organizing the workers into the union and where we led the workers to victory in the strike, the union lost ground due to the absence of Party organization.

The building of the shop nuclei should proceed very systematically. In the discussion of the Open Letter and in the plan of work, recruiting should be concretized.

Despite all talk of the necessity of organization of Party members on the basis of the factory, we still find Communists who work together in one factory belonging to a street unit. A thorough examination of the membership will help organize these members into shop nuclei. Without further hesitation, we should establish shop nuclei even in those factories where we have only two or three comrades. Recruiting of the best elements from existing shop groups; utilization of subscription lists of the various Party papers and examination of the membership of mass organizations, will help set up shop nuclei in factories where we have no Party organization yet.

Strikes and struggles for economic and political needs, carried out on the basis of the united front, will tear down the artificial barriers existing between the revolutionary workers and the broad masses of other workers. Participation in the daily struggles of the workers, winning in this manner their confidence and extending the influence of the Party, and systematic attention both from the outside forces and the comrades in the factory to recruiting, will result in the building up of a solid organization of the Party in the factory. Such an organization, basing itself as it does on organization of struggle, must of necessity grow into a decisive body in the factory.

The tremendous fluctuation in the Party which in some concentration districts exceeded in the last period the 100 percent mark, took place mainly in the street nuclei. In the shop nuclei, even in those instances where we did not succeed in carrying on effective struggles, we did not lose members, but at the worst, remained stagnant, proving that organization at the point of production is more stable than on territorial basis. In the Chicago district, in spite of the unsatisfactory factory work in the past, the membership in the shop nuclei grew steadily while at the same time there was an 80 per cent fluctuation of the membership although militant mass unemployed struggles were carried through. Close contact and relationship between the members of the nuclei; between nuclei and non-Party workers in the factory, as well as a clearer understanding of the problems due to the common interests and a naturally careful selection of the best elements for the Party, stabilize the membership of the nuclei, reducing the fluctuation to a minimum. In the territorial units the membership is heterogeneous, not recruited from the daily struggles and activities in the territory, but gotten through general agitation and in most cases without the consultation of the unit membership. In addition to these major reasons, the very poor, politically weak, life of the street unit is a cause of the alarming fluctuation.

To secure greater stability and raise the political level of the membership and develop new leading forces, it is necessary to establish evening schools and study groups for the members of the Party in the concentration points.

*We can not over-emphasize the political importance of drawing in larger numbers of American-born workers from the basic industries and developing from them leading cadres for the Party. In connection with this, special attention should be paid to the recruiting of Negro workers.*

Every Party member, every leading committee, imbued with the

central task of building the Party into a mass Party of the American proletariat, must exert all energies toward the carrying out of this task. The Open Letter states:

“...a Communist Party, with a very weak and inadequately functioning organization in the big factories and among the decisive sections of the American industrial workers, a Communist Party whose entire policy, whose entire agitation and propaganda, whose entire daily work, is not concentrated on winning over and mobilizing these workers and winning of the factories, a Communist Party which, through its revolutionary trade union work, does not build highways to the broadest masses of workers, cannot lay claim to a policy capable of making it the leader of the working class within the shortest possible time.”

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# The Significance of the Party Anniversary for the Polish Workers in the U.S.A.

By B. K. GEBERT

THE Socialist movement among the Polish workers in the United States was divided from the early days of the immigration according to the divisions in the Socialist movement in Poland, particularly in that part of Poland which was annexed by Czarist Russia. The Social Democracy Party of Poland and Lithuania, headed by Rosa Luxemburg, Julian Marchlewski, Felix Dzierzynski and others, stood on the principles of revolutionary Marxism, for the unity of the Polish and Russian workers against the Czarist government and capitalism, and was part of the Left Wing of the Second International. The Polish Socialist Party, headed by Josef Pilsudski, present fascist dictator of Poland, by Ignatz Daszynski and others, had an utterly nationalistic character and instead of for the unity and solidarity of the working class, stood for the "unity of the Polish nation as a whole".

The first attempts to organize the Polish workers in the United States were made by the National-Socialists. They organized the Polish Socialist Alliance of America, which was not affiliated to the Socialist Party of the U. S. Other groups of the Polish Socialists in the United States, who were adherents of the program of Rosa Luxemburg—the former member of the Social Democracy of Poland and Lithuania, and also of the left-wing of the Polish Socialist Party, which split from Pilsudski's social-patriotic party in 1905, did not have a consolidated organization up till the beginning of the Russian Revolution of 1905. These left-wing Socialists, stimulated by the development of the revolutionary movement in Poland and Russia, consolidated their forces and gained quite an influence among the Polish workers. They established their daily paper in Chicago, the *Dziennik Ludowy* (People's Daily). However, the paper had not a clear-cut position, as represented by Dzierzynski and Rosa Luxemburg. There was much vacillation and hesitation, however, being adherents in general to international solidarity. In contradistinction to the Polish Socialist Alliance, the left-wing Polish Socialists were part of the S.P. of A. After the revolution of 1905, the upper hand

in the Polish section of the S. P. went over to the right-wing elements, and on many questions of principle they compromised. The differences between the Polish section of the S. P. and the social-patriotic Polish Socialist Alliance slowly disappeared and before the World War a "unity" convention was called at which both groups united, the convention deciding to join the S. P., organizing the Polish Alliance of the S. P., a language federation of the S. P. of America. This was a victory for national unity against class unity, although the convention did not commit itself in favor of any division of the Socialist movement in Poland. This "unity", however, lasted for a very short period, and again a split occurred, with the former members of the Polish Socialist Alliance withdrawing from the S. P. and reorganizing into an "independent" organization under the old name of the Polish Socialist Alliance.

During all this period the work of both groups of Polish Socialists was orientated mostly towards the situation in Europe, with very little participation in the class struggle in the United States, and their activities among the Polish workers were confined to the denunciation of the Roman Catholic Church, bourgeois leaders of the mass organizations of the Polish workers, and only incidentally to participation in the direct class struggles in this country.

At the outbreak of the World War, the Polish Socialist Party and elements around it organized Pilsudski's Legions on the side of German imperialism under the slogan of "Fight for the independence of Poland," pledging their loyalty to the Emperor of Austria, Joseph II. This policy was supported without any reservation, by the Polish Socialist Alliance and later by the Polish Federation of the S. P., which threw all its support to the Pilsudski Legions.

An opposition was immediately started against this policy, led by W. Dmowski, D. Ellbaum, Bresslauer, B. K. Gebert, and others. This opposition against the social-patriotic war-mongers received support particularly from the Pennsylvania miners and above all, from the miners in the anthracite region, as well as from some branches in Chicago and Detroit. The miners were able to get control of the *Gornik Polski* (Polish Miner), published in Pittsburgh, Pa., by the Polish Federation of the S. P., and made this the organ not only of the miners, but of the revolutionary Socialists in struggle for Socialism, against imperialist war, against the social-imperialists, as represented both by the Polish Federation of the S. P. and the Polish Socialist Alliance.

In December 1918, a National Conference of the left-wing of the Polish Federation of the S.P. was held in Detroit, at which it was decided to move the paper from Pittsburgh to Detroit and to publish it under the name of *Glos Robotniczy* (Workers' Voice). This

conference constituted itself as the Polish Federation of the Socialist Party, and previously presented charges to the National Committee of the S.P. against the official leadership of the Polish Federation of the S.P. for its support of German imperialism by supporting Pilsudski's Legions. The National Executive Committee of the S.P. removed the official leadership and the whole Federation represented by them, declaring that the left-wing is the bona-fide Polish organization of the S.P. The National Executive Committee of the S.P. came to this decision through the odd combination of two tendencies; one, the left wing and the pacifist elements; and the other, those who were not so much against supporting war, but who thought the Polish war-mongers were on the wrong side. The Polish Socialists supported German imperialism, while these members of the National Executive Committee of the S.P. were in favor of supporting the Allies.

The left wing, now constituted as the Polish Federation of the S.P., developed a broad campaign among the Polish workers against war, while the Polish social patriots, who were expelled from the S.P., were campaigning for Pilsudski, which meant for the support of German imperialism. They managed to combine their support of German imperialism with the support of American imperialism, selling Liberty Bonds and in other ways aiding the U.S. in war. This further exposed their treacherous role, and gave additional strength to the work of the Polish Federation of the S.P., which grew, winning members and whole branches of the organization of the war-supporters as well as many other workers. The *Glos Robotniczy* became a daily.

In March 1919, a national conference of the Polish Federation of the S.P., held in Detroit, decided to support the left-wing of the S.P. A decision was reached unanimously by the Polish Federation of the S.P. pledging its support to the organization of the Communist Party in the U.S. When the national organization convention of the Communist Party was called in the City of Chicago on September 1, 1919, the Polish Federation, which had already been expelled from the S.P., was represented by an official delegation at that convention and joined the C.P. in a body. At the beginning the C.P. retained as a hangover the social-democratic organizational structure; accordingly, we still had the Polish section of the C.P.

During the Palmer raids, in 1920, the editorial staff of the *Glos Robotniczy* was arrested and hundreds of members of the Polish Section of the C.P. were held for deportation. The paper was republished, however, immediately after the raid, to begin with as a weekly and then again as a daily.

Pilsudski's war against the Soviet Union gave the opportunity for the development of a mass campaign among the Polish workers in support of the Soviet Union against Pilsudski's invasion and particularly against the \$50,000,000 war loan, which Pilsudski's government attempted to raise from the Polish workers in the United States. Huge mass meetings were held, circulation of our paper increased from 6 or 7 thousand to 17,000. The influence of the Polish Communists during that period grew. Aside from publishing the daily, the Party being illegal at that time, the Polish Section of the C.P. published its illegal organ, the *Communist*.

The process of liquidating the split within the Communist movement in the U.S. found the Polish Section of the C.P. ideologically and organizationally connected with the leftist opposition which stood against the organization of the legal party, the Workers' Party, at that time.

In the meantime a new development took place in the Polish Socialist Alliance, and the left wing, which split from it, joined the Workers' Party together with these comrades of the Polish section of the C. P., who till this time supported that policy. Shortly afterwards, however, the Polish Section of the C.P. joined the unified ranks of the Workers (Communist) Party, and thus became part and parcel of the Communist Party of the U.S.A., section of the Communist International.

After the Polish-Soviet war, an opportunist opposition developed within the ranks of the *Glos Robotniczy* against its policy of open support of the Soviet Union and against the ideological control of the Communist Party over the paper, and demands were voiced for a change in its policies in the opportunist direction. Some members of the Party joined this right-wing opportunist opposition, and through a series of mistakes which were committed by our comrades, it succeeded in winning the majority in the "International Publishing Association"—a share-holding co-operative association, which legally controlled the paper. A board of directors, opposed to the line of the Party, was elected at a conference of the "International Publishing Association," which forced the resignation of the Communist editors—Radwanski and Gebert—from the editorial board, and replaced them with a renegade, who had formerly sold war bonds of the Polish government, but who had nonetheless been re-admitted into the Party.

The opportunistic group which took control of the *Glos Robotniczy* with the help of the "Proletarian Party", maintained the paper but for a short period, because workers refused to have anything to do with the paper. In a few months the *Glos Robotniczy* went bankrupt and the entire printing plant and building were lost.

In the meantime the Party started to publish in Chicago its official Polish organ—*Trybuna Robotnicza* (Workers' Tribune), which steadily began to regain the lost ground of the defunct *Głos Robotniczy*, which had been captured and destroyed by the anti-Party and anti-Soviet elements.

Since this event there has been no serious opposition or division within the ranks of the Polish Communists in the U.S. They have been more closely linked with the work and tasks of the Party. However, up till today, the work among the Polish workers still remains very unsatisfactory.

The number of Polish workers in the Party is still very small. The ideological level of the Polish members of the Party is very unsatisfactory. The Polish workers in this country work in heavy industries, such as mining, steel, packing, railroad, auto, textile, transportation, etc. One can say without exaggeration that in the U.S. we have a larger industrial proletariat of Polish descent than in Poland itself. In spite of the fact that in Poland the C.P. has made tremendous advances among the industrial proletariat and the peasantry, in the U.S. the Party is still extremely weak among the Polish-American proletariat. One of the outstanding tasks confronting the Party among the Polish workers is to develop cadres and to orientate the entire work toward the major problem of organizing the Polish workers into the unions of the T.U.U.L. and into the C.P.

The newly organized Polish Chamber of Labor, which is a united front organization and which has already established a certain influence, is a good instrument with which to penetrate among the masses of workers. It must, however, be looked upon only as an instrument and not as an aim in itself.

In addition to reaching the adult workers of Polish descent, which in many factories constitute the decisive section of the workers, it is necessary to develop work among the Polish American youth, which is at present under the influence of the Roman Catholic Church, of fascist and semi-fascist organizations. In short, we have to draw into the struggle the masses of Polish workers in this country. There can be no development of work among the Polish workers without this basic objective.

The struggle for a revolutionary socialist, for a Communist movement among the Polish workers in the U.S. has been going on for decades. Despite this, there is hardly any development of cadres from the Polish-American workers. Particularly at the present time, with the growing activization of the masses, the problem of winning the Polish workers for our Party is a decisive problem. By relegating this task only to the Polish Buro and its paper our Party

will be unable to make the necessary rapid advance. The whole Party must pay more attention to the problem of winning the Polish workers, must give proper guidance and leadership to the work of the Polish Buro, constantly checking up on its work, orientating its daily activities towards the factories and trade unions. In the course of this work, the struggle against Polish fascism, and social-fascism, assumes tremendous importance. Without waging this struggle it will be impossible to penetrate the Polish workers and win them for the class struggle.

The American bourgeoisie fully recognizes the importance of controlling the Polish workers. They systematically promote, in cities like Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, and Buffalo local Polish politicians through whom the Republican and Democratic parties control the votes of the Polish workers. In strikes these politicians supply strikebreakers and lend aid in various ways to the bosses. The entire Polish bourgeois press in this country is very hostile and antagonistic towards the struggles of the workers, acting as strikebreakers and carrying on systematic slanderous campaigns against the Soviet Union.

In addition to the tasks enumerated above, it is necessary to popularize the advance made by the C.P. in Poland and its victories in struggles that will stimulate revolutionary activities among the Polish workers in the U.S. In reviewing the history and development of Communism among the Polish-American workers we see that the Polish workers were in the very front ranks in struggle against war and against the betrayals on the part of the social-fascist leaders. Unfortunately, at the present time, the work has fallen off from the level it attained during the war and in the period immediately after the war. This level must be regained and surpassed in view of the present situation in the U.S. and throughout the world.

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